

SOCCER

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CREATIVE SQUAD FOR OLYROOS



Olyroo Spirit: Brett Holman (Left) and Anthony Pelikan are just some of the many new hot talents on show for the new Olympics squad.

By Peter Damalas

National Under 23s coach Frank Farina yesterday announced his twenty man squad that will contest the Oceania qualifiers for the 2004 Olympic Games.

The qualifying tournament will take place between January 14 and 30, the winner granted automatic entry into the final tournament in Athens in August.

Farina's selection represents a balance between National Soccer League

players, and those based overseas, while five Young Socceroos will take the next step up to Under 23 level.

The previous Under 23s squad that played against Turkey in September consisted of only seven NSL based players.

Players such as Power defender Michael Beauchamp, Stallions crafty midfielder Nick Carle, Knights star Anthony Pelikan, and Spirit striker Dylan Macallister have been rewarded for their impressive form of late and will

certainly figure in coach Farina's plans if the Olyroos qualify for Athens.

The latter will face stiff competition from one of Australia's hottest young talents Brett Holman (left out of the Young Socceroos squad) for the lead striking role with Alex Brosque likely to operate just behind.

The goalkeeping role will be contested between South

Melbourne's Eugene Galekovic and Michael Turnbull, whose new found consistency with Marconi Stallions has seen him edge out Brad Jones, who is based in England.

Sweeper Ljubo Milicevic will captain the side.

Perhaps the most intriguing feature of the twenty-man squad is the midfield, which consists of a host of attacking talents. Coach Farina will certainly have his work cut out in finding the best combination of midfielders. Carl Valeri, Anthony Danze and Spase Dilevski, who distinguished themselves in the Young Socceroos, victory over eventual champions Brazil in the United Arab Emirates, have been included alongside NSL players Ahmad Elrich, Carle and Pelikan.

Creativity and support play will clearly be a prominent aspect of Australia's matches against their less fancied opponents.

Little information has been provided on the opposition, with only one videotape made available, but Australia are expected to qualify with ease.

Australia will play four matches in nine days in the first round robin phase, against Samoa, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands

The full squad is:

Goalkeepers

Eugene Galekovic
Michael Turnbull

Defenders

Michael Beauchamp
Shane Cansdell-Sherriff
Jonathan McKain
Ljubo Milicevic
Jade North
David Tarka

Midfielders

Nick Carle
Anthony Danze
Spase Dilevski
Ahmad Elrich
Anthony Pelikan
Wayne Srhoj
Carl Valeri
Luke Wilkshire

Forwards

Alex Brosque
Richard Garcia
Brett Holman
Dylan Macallister

- South Melbourne
- Marconi Stallions
- Parramatta Power
- AGF Aarhus (Denmark)
- National Bucuresti (Romania)
- FC Thun (Switzerland)
- Perth Glory
- Nottingham Forest (England)

- Marconi Stallions
- Perth Glory
- Rot Weiss Essen (Germany)
- Parramatta Power
- Melbourne Knights
- Perth Glory
- Inter Milan (Italy)
- Bristol City (England)

- Marconi Stallions
- West Ham (England)
- Excelsior (Netherlands)
- Northern Spirit

and Fiji. All matches will be held at Marconi Stadium with the winner set to play off the winner of New Zealand's group (which includes Cook Islands, American Samoa, Tonga and Vanuatu) home and away to determine the winner of the region.

Preparations begin on January 3, and the squad will fly to Perth and Brisbane to play friendlies against the Korea Republic Under 23 team at Members Equity

Stadium on January 7, and the Brisbane Strikers three days later at Perry Park.

The heavy schedule will certainly force a rotation policy when it comes to selecting the starting XI for each fixture, as the players face the prospect of eight matches in twenty four days.

All twenty players will use this opportunity to further stake their claim for the Olympic Games, when Farina will consider using more overseas based players and may include the three over-age players that are allowed for each competing nation.

D'Avray slams Awaratife

Perth Glory coach Mich d'Avray has slammed comments by TV pundit Francis Awaratife that labelled Perth Glory as dull and unimpressive.

"What a ridiculous comment to make the day after we have scored six goals through six different scorers," d'Avray said.

"I don't know what is motivating Francis but I want a fair go for my players. They deserve a proper assessment of their performances, not glib sound bites thrown in for the sake of controversy.

"As a former player I would have expected Francis to show more understanding of the game.

"The impact of his comments on people who were at the match don't concern me because they would know he is talking rubbish, but many people who have not been at the game might take such comments as accurate.

"I wonder if Francis even saw the game he made comment on and when your remarks have the potential to impact on people's careers I think you have to take some responsibility for what you say and what you are basing it on.

"In season 2001-2002 Perth Glory scored 52 goals, eleven more than the next highest scoring team that season. In the last campaign we scored 77 goals in 34 matches - that's 2.3 goals per game.

"Nobody objects to fair-minded criticism but this defies all logic."

WOLVES BITE LEADERS



Read on Page 6

What's Inside ABSW This Week:

- Oz Youth Job Up For Grabs? (Page 8)
- Petrovski Back On Track (Page 3)
- Chima the Destroyer (Page 12)
- Arrarte's Way (Page 12)

and loads more hot stories on the NSL and Overseas action from England and Scotland

Important Message: ABSW would like to wish all its readers a very safe and prosperous New Year. Just to let the readers know that this week and next, the paper will adopt a 24-page spread due to the holiday season but rest assured, the usual 32-page spread of soccer's only Australian newspaper will continue again on the 7th of January.

Readers don't despair, you will not miss a beat on the on-goings of the National League and our weekly look on the world stage.

Don't forget our extensive 8-page NSW page spread as well.

From all the ABSW team we wish you a great start to the New Year

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BY DANIEL KUZIW

Leeds United have turned down a £3.5 million bid for Mark Viduka from Manchester United.

United boss Sir Alex Ferguson pressed chief executive David Gill to make the offer only hours after Rio Ferdinand received an eight-month ban from the FA for missing a drug test.

Leeds turned down the bid, but the People says United are prepared to go higher to land the burly Australian.

United boss Ferguson is convinced the capture of Viduka is an easier alternative to attempting to prise Louis Saha away from Fulham or Jermaine Defoe from West Ham.

Interested clubs have been told they will have to wait to snap up Marconi striker Alex Brosque.

The Australia U23 international, who has been likened to Liverpool ace Harry Kewell, was tracked by Middlesbrough and Liverpool at this month's World Youth Championships in the UAE.

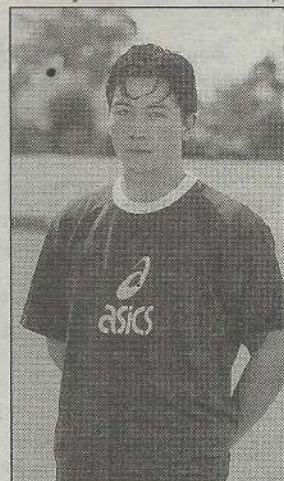
However, in an interview on Australian TV yesterday, Brosque said he was prepared to play out the season with Marconi, even if offers came in for him during January's transfer window.

Brosque also confirmed he had received some interest during his campaign in the UAE.

Barnsley have extended midfielder Jacob Burns' contract a third month.

The Australia international joined the Second Division outfit in October and has since had his month-long deal extended twice.

Burns is hoping to do enough in January to convince manager Gudjon Thordarson to hand him a long-term contract.



Jacob Burns has secured a third month contract with Barnsley.

Tim Cahill is a major January target for Aston Villa boss David O'Leary, who has set aside £3 million to prise the midfielder away from the New Den.

However, Villa will face competition from Southampton, where manager Gordon Strachan is in the market for



Aston Villa are hot on the heels of Aussie star Timmy Cahill currently at Millwall.

new midfielder.

Strachan likes the versatility of Cahill and is convinced he can add to his squad, particularly with Anders Svensson and Chris Marsden likely to be offloaded next month.

Osasuna striker John Aloisi has hinted he could join Adelaide United in the future.

The Australia international told the *Sun-Herald*, "My brother is really enjoying playing in front of good crowds."

"The good thing about Adelaide is the whole city is behind the team. If you did the same thing in Sydney you couldn't go wrong."

"I honestly think a lot of Australian players would return from Europe if it looked like the league was professional."

Peterborough United boss Barry Fry has pulled out of a deal for West Ham midfielder Richard Garcia over his Australia U23 commitments.

Garcia was set to join the Posh before he received a call-up to next month's Olympic qualifiers in Australia for the Athens Olympics.

Fry revealed: "I had agreed a deal with West Ham United striker Richard Garcia with Alan Pardew, but Richard has been called up by the Australian under 23 side for the Olympics and would miss the whole of January so unless Alan can talk him out of going, then that is a no-go."

Patrick Kisnorbo's progress in his first season in Europe has alerted clubs south of the border. A source close to Hearts revealed to tribalfutbol.com that no less than four Premiership clubs had scouts at the weekend's match against Kilmarnock with the purpose of following Kisnorbo.

The Australia international signed a two-year deal with Hearts last summer after joining them on a Bosman from South Melbourne.

Sydney Olympic's exciting Japanese import and fan favourite Hiroyuki Ishida has been linked with a possible move to Belgium.

The star midfielder who uses his skills and speed to attract the

attention of the best markers in the NSL has stated his desire to one day grace the pitches of the European scene.

Ishida could be possibly looking towards heading over to Belgium in January - purely speculation at this stage, ABSW will keep you updated with his progress.



Hiro Ishida could be playing out in the Belgian league very soon?

Former NSWIS graduate Andrew Lazarou has grabbed the headlines in Cyprus after signing for Cypriot First Division club APOEL on a first grade contract.

The 17-year-old midfielder left Australia earlier this year for Cyprus hoping to secure a long-term contract with the Cypriot club.

Known to many in Cyprus as one of the best clubs in the land, they were impressed with NSWIS graduate that they snapped him up on a permanent deal.



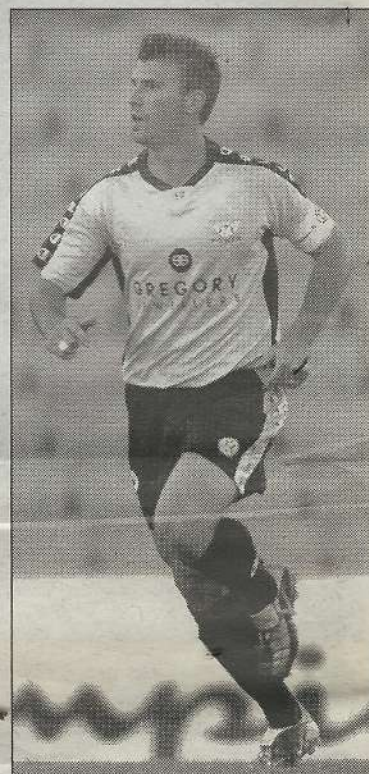
CECCOLI BLOW FOR POWER

Parramatta Power has suffered another injury blow with captain Alvin Ceccoli ruled out of the game for three weeks after undergoing an arthroscopy.

Ceccoli who missed last week's NSL clash with the Kingz will not be back in action until mid-January.

The two-time NSL Championship-winning sweeper has been hampered by the knee injury in recent weeks and underwent the operation to see the extent of the problem. The knee has been cleaned up and the damage was less than expected, which is one positive note.

Ceccoli will join strikers Johnny Buonavoglia (3 months) and Kosta Salapadidis (4 weeks), defender Andrew Durante (3 months) and goalkeeper Daniel Beltrame (4 weeks) on



Power skipper Alvin Ceccoli will miss Parramatta's next three crucial outings due to a knee injury.

SOUTH SIGN UP TWO NEW COMMERCIAL PARTNERS

South Melbourne's on field success and strong push for inclusion into the reformed national league in 2004 has assisted it in securing two more significant commercial partners.

Australian owned health and sporting supplements company Musashi, will sponsor the club's senior coach Stuart Munro and his team of support coaches in the first sponsorship of this type for South Melbourne.

Club Chief Executive Mr Mark Patterson said that this announcement continued the club's push to join with strong and credible commercial brand partners.

"Musashi is a strong and well known sports brand that has been involved in the AFL and Rugby League markets for

a number of years and it is great news for our club and for the code in general that Musashi has seen value in partnering with us this season" said Patterson.

In professional sport it is crucial that the players are given every possible support and opportunity to perform at their ultimate level and this partnership not only provides a cash injection for the club it also includes the provision of the highly regarded energy sports supplements for the players.

The physical nature of the sport coupled with its summer playing season makes this relationship even more valuable to South Melbourne as it heads towards a promising finals campaign.

Former Sydney Swan and

the Power's growing long-term injury list.

Power Coach Nick Theodorakopoulos is expected to draft defender Paul O'Grady into the side for the clash with Adelaide United after he has been sitting on the bench since his return from off-season groin surgery.

"Losing Alvin is a big loss for us," Theodorakopoulos said. "Not only is he a good sweeper, one of the best in the country, but he is also a very good communicator and organiser at the back of our defence."

"We now have a few players out and our squad, which although high on quality is not long, is being tested and will be tested even further by the heavy schedule we have during the Christmas/New Year period."

But I have every faith in the players we have and we will continue to play the attacking soccer that has worked for us this year."

Musashi's Sate Sales Manager Darren Kappler speaking at today's announcement said that South Melbourne had been heavily using the product so far this season and he is in discussions with the coaching panel and the medical team to fine tune the use of the supplements for the betterment of the player's performance.

"We are encouraged by the professional attitude of the club and particularly the encouragement and enthusiasm that Stuart Munro and the players have shown to our relationship" said Kappler.

"This professionalism added to the current on-field success attracts us to South Melbourne and we hope the relationship continues for the long-term" Kappler went on to say.

PETROVSKI'S RETURN: A BREATH OF FRESH AIR

By Peter Damalas

Parramatta Power striker Saso Petrovski marked his return to the National Soccer League with a debut goal in the 2-1 home defeat to Adelaide United.

While the loss of the three points left the club with a sour taste as they lie in third position, nine points behind table topping South Melbourne, Petrovski's effort before half-time may ease coach Nick Theodorakopoulos' anguish over the loss of strikers Kosta Salapasis and John Buonavoglia due to injury.

The latest recruit of big spending Parramatta said that he is happy to be back in the NSL and hopes that his return will encourage other Australians playing overseas to return in time for the revamped professional league.

The former Bankstown City and Parramatta Eagles player found himself in Denmark with first division club Viborg after his championship winning exploits with Wollongong Wolves in 2000 and 2001.

He experienced the ultimate sensation in his three years on the south coast, scoring in the grand



Saso Petrovski shown in action during his dream debut where the star striker bagged a goal in their match against Adelaide United.

final win over South Melbourne, his final appearance before his move to Europe.

Petrovski made a name for himself in his Viborg debut with a goal, and after a period in which he found himself in and out of the first team, further endeared himself to the supporters with a hat trick in the club's biggest victory against Esbjerg.

But home is where the heart is, and Petrovski was happy to join title challengers Parramatta as he hopes to add another championship to his name.

"It's good to be back. Parramatta Power has a great set up, it is as professional as Viborg," he said.

"I realised while I was over there that Australia is in my blood and I kept up to date with things in Australian soccer on the Internet."

His addition not only to the club, but to the national league, is a breath of fresh air considering the Australian Soccer Association's plans to stem the tide of players trialling overseas and bring European based Australians back to these shores.

Petrovski said that the desire to assist the standard of soccer was a

motivating factor for him.

"Hopefully this may be seen as a sign to others to come back to their home environment and help the game grow here," he said.

The ASA has recognised the dearth of talent in the national league, largely due to the mass exodus of players, and the creation of a new ten team competition is geared towards attracting talented players to the local game.

The acquisition of Petrovski is part of a 'first wave'. However, the 28 year old conceded that the money offered by some European clubs is often difficult to ignore.

"Money is a problem here. Players struggle to get what they deserve in terms of payment while in Europe, the money is thrown about, sometimes up to double or triple what players receive here."

Petrovski also compared the playing conditions in Denmark with Australia and spoke about the pressures of European football.

"It was a great experience. I

enjoyed my football and experienced life as a professional, training in the morning and afternoon. As a result [of the money and time invested], there were big expectations placed on us.

"There is a big difference between the climate and the playing fields. The surfaces over there were immaculate while the grounds here are not as soft, due to the heat and the water restrictions," he said.

Petrovski is a firm believer that the establishment of a professional league will improve the standing of the sport in Australia, and that the building blocks towards success have been put into place, at least on the field.

"The competition runs at a good speed with good intensity. I'm sure that having professional clubs will prove the best thing for Australian soccer," he said.

Petrovski's goalscoring exploits will certainly have a positive influence on the fortunes of both his club and the competition.

SOCCER'S OZ BUZZ

By Mark Stavroulakis

The message is clear – Frank Lowy has attracted the attention of many new backers who could find themselves harbouring a new club in next year's reformed soccer league.

A proposed 10-team competition has already sparked interest from Western Australia, QLD, South Australia, Regional NSW, Tasmania and Victoria.

Not a bad list of states that will issue their proposals for next season as the league prepares to kick-off a new beginning in November next year.

Many people have been baffled at the fact that no Sydney clubs have entered in the same domain as the states mentioned above.

Rest assured, plans have already taken place in promoting Sydney clubs, some traditional, some new for a

hopeful entry in next year's league.

It looks as though two teams will survive the cull from Sydney, three will banish towards the NSW Premier League and ultimately could be lost forever.



A stern message has been sent out by the Sydney Olympic board that they do want to be part of the new league next year amidst reports the club was ready to fold.

The Stallions at this current stage look like the front runners to grab a spot due to its fantastic set-up and facilities at the club. That and the fact that CLUB MARCONI

has picked up a notch since its black days of going bust.

Sydney United have kept a tight lid on what they wish to do next season but have stated an intent of being there next year.

Northern Spirit's off field dramas with the club going into liquidation won them no favours with the new ASA officials.

However, Spirit chairman Antonio Gelonesi has stated that the club will find new backers.

Interesting news has filtered out of the Parramatta camp. Power chairman Denis Fitzgerald stated that the leagues club would not continue financing the soccer side after the end of the season but claims that the Power could be taken over by someone else have arisen.

A strong indication has it that the Sydney clubs aren't finished yet.

The ASA have welcomed that all clubs, new and old put in their new applications in by February and they will be taken under close consideration.

Place your bets as to who will make the cut – don't forget that there has also been a rumoured new club that could open up shop in Sydney's East?



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SOCCERWOMAN

by Janene Mar

THE YEAR THAT WAS — Part One

JANUARY

Australia Cup A Good Gauge

2003 kicked off in solid fashion with a promising performance by the Matildas in the 4-nation Australia Cup held in Canberra, played in oppressive heat alongside the backdrop of the tragic local bushfires. The Matildas faced a smorgasbord of footballing styles - Scandinavian, Asian, and Central American - at the start of this World Cup year.

The Australians had been rocked by injury, the defence most affected with late withdrawals to Dianne Alagich and Melissa Barbieri, whilst new captain Cheryl Salisbury was also sidelined for much of the week's play.

The Matildas finished in second place, beaten only by the big mover of world football Sweden, who ended up making the final of the World Cup later in the year.

Sun 26 January 2003

AUSTRALIA 2 (Kelly Golebiowski 10', 76') defeated SOUTH KOREA 0

Australia: Nichols, Wainwright [c], Davies, Slatyer, Garriock, Karp (Duus 65), Hohnke (Salisbury 46), Peters, Small (Foster 46), Golebiowski, Mann (Crawford 71).

Wed 29 January 2003

AUSTRALIA 2 (April Mann 9', 45') defeated MEXICO 0

Australia: Nichols, Salisbury [c], Wainwright (Grant 46), Slatyer, Davies, Garriock, Peters, Hohnke (Karp 65), Duus (Small 66), Golebiowski (Swaffer 88), Mann (Crawford 77).

Sat 1 February 2003

SWEDEN 3 (Salina Olsson 40', Jane Tornqvist 49', Kristin Bengtsson 73') defeated AUSTRALIA 1 (Kelly Golebiowski 38')

Australia: Nichols (Kell 77), Salisbury [c] (Grant 46), Swaffer, Slatyer, Garriock, Peters, Hohnke (Crawford 85), Karp



NSW Sapphires picked up this year's Women's National League Championship

(Duus 65), Davies, Golebiowski, Mann (Small 68).

FEBRUARY

More Aussies Signed to WUSA

In late February came the news that Australians were just as much in demand as anyone when it came to signing 'foreign' players to the world's best profes-

sional league, America's WUSA.

Joining the already established Dianne Alagich, with the San Jose CyberRays for a record third season, were three more Australians amongst the league's 32 foreign berths.

The first confirmed news was that of Kelly Golebiowski's signing to Washington Freedom, who came to the

notice of the Freedom from her impressive performances in the previous two seasons of the W-League where she won Rookie of the Year in 2001.

Three days later, Cheryl Salisbury and Joanne Peters were signed to fill half of New York Power's foreign spots, now under the leadership of former Matildas coach Tom Sermanni.

Saturday 5 April 2003

AUSTRALIA 19 (Joanne Peters 4', 35', 50', 80', Kelly Golebiowski 15', 42', 46', 61', Rhian Davies 18', Danielle Small 41', 57', 78', April Mann 52', 58', 86', 88', Sacha Wainwright 55', Thea Slatyer 56', Heather Garriock 72') defeated SAMOA 0

Australia: Barbieri, Wainwright (Garriock 62'), Alagich (Rockall 75'), Salisbury (c) (Foster 51'), Davies, Golebiowski, Mann, Peters, Slatyer, Duus, Small.

Monday 7 April 2003

AUSTRALIA 11 (Hayley Crawford 8', 17', Rhian Davies 11', Dianne Alagich 34', 62' pen, Tal Karp 37', 81', Olivia Hohnke 59', Danielle Small 65', Amy Wilson 71', 82') defeated COOK ISLANDS 0

Australia: Kell, Wainwright (c) (Foster 46'), Alagich, Davies (Garriock 46'), Golebiowski, Hohnke, Slatyer (Small 58'), Grant, Karp, Wilson, Crawford.

Wednesday 9 April 2003

AUSTRALIA 13 (April Mann 5', 41', 49', 55', Joanne Peters 17', Cheryl Salisbury 29', 81' pen, Dianne Alagich 46', Kelly Golebiowski 59', 71', Heather Garriock 60', 78', 89') defeated PAPUA NEW GUINEA 0

Australia: Barbieri, Foster, Wainwright, Alagich (Grant 55'), Salisbury (c), Davies, Mann (Golebiowski 55'), Peters (Garriock 55'), Duus, Rockall, Small.

Sunday 13 April 2003

AUSTRALIA 2 (Joanne Peters 23', Danielle Small 48') defeated NEW ZEALAND 0

Australia: Barbieri, Foster, Wainwright (c), Alagich, Davies, Mann (Wilson 60'), Peters, Garriock (Karp 81'), Slatyer, Duus, Small.

PLAYER LIST — AIS SELECTION CAMP, JANUARY 2004 :

Players (32) :	Team	Hometown	Pos	DOB
Dianne ALAGICH	Adelaide Sensation	Adelaide	D	12/05/79
Melissa BARBIERI	Victoria Vision	Melbourne	GK	20/01/80
Amy BEATTIE	Canberra Eclipse	Canberra	GK	08/09/80
Leah BLAYNEY	NSW Sapphires	Blue Mountains	M	28/10/86
Joanne BURGESS	NSW Sapphires	Sydney	M	23/09/79
Catherine CANNULI	NSW Sapphires	Sydney	F	03/03/86
Michelle CARNEY	NSW Sapphires	Sydney	F	30/12/81
Rhian DAVIES	Canberra Eclipse	Sydney	D	05/01/81
Emma DAVISON	NSW Sapphires	Sydney	D	04/05/85
Belinda DAWNEY	Queensland Sting	Tweed Heads	F	11/01/82
Lisa DE VANNA	Adelaide Sensation	Perth	F	14/11/84
Bryony DUUS	Queensland Sting	Brisbane	M	07/10/77
Gill FOSTER	Canberra Eclipse	Sydney	M	28/08/76
Heather GARRIOCK	Queensland Sting	Sydney	M	21/12/82
Sarah GARVEN	Queensland Sting	Brisbane	D	30/12/78
Lisa GILBERT	NSW Sapphires	Sydney	D	09/12/78
Katie GILL	Northern NSW Pride	Newcastle	F	10/12/84
Kelly GOLEBIOWSKI	(Washington Freedom)	Sydney	F	26/07/81
Pam GRANT	Queensland Sting	Rockhampton	D	15/11/82
Lana HARCH	Queensland Sting	Toowoomba	M	23/11/84
Tal KARP	Canberra Eclipse	Perth	M	30/12/81
Cassandra KELL	NSW Sapphires	Central Coast	GK	08/08/80
April MANN	Queensland Sting	Brisbane	F	21/04/78
Kate MCSHEA	Queensland Sting	Brisbane	M	13/04/83
Joanne PETERS	(New York Power)	Leeton	M	11/03/79
Karla REUTER	Queensland Sting	Toowoomba	D	14/06/84
Cheryl SALISBURY	(New York Power)	Newcastle	D	08/03/74
Thea SLATYER	(NSW Sapphires)	Sydney	D	02/02/83
Danielle SMALL	Northern NSW Pride	Newcastle	M	07/02/79
Amy TAYLOR	Canberra Eclipse	Canberra	D	11/06/79
Sacha WAINWRIGHT	Canberra Eclipse	Canberra	D	06/02/72
Sarah WALSH	Queensland Sting	Sydney	F	11/01/83

No More Turner At Kingz

AREVAMPED Football Kingz, with heavy-weight backing by New Zealand Soccer, will be ready to take their place in the planned new-look 2004 Australian league following the departure of their most visible figure Chris Turner.

Under dramatic restructuring announced that the Kingz shareholder-director Turner will step down as chairman of the club's board. English-based businessman and now minority shareholder Brian Katzen will lead the shake-up.

He has already identified prospective players and coaches for the new-look entity.

The Kingz, represented by general manager Peter Cox and Turner, met the NZS board in an attempt to win support as they prepared their bid for a place in the restructured Australian Soccer League, which is tipped to start late next year.

A statement from NZS would have been music to the club's ears.

In part, it said: "After a thorough briefing from all parties, New Zealand Soccer has decided to endorse and facilitate a bid by a restructured Football Kingz for a place in the new league."

"The decision was only taken after the NZS board received guarantees from the Football Kingz that there will be a 'significant shareholder restructuring within the Football Kingz organisation'."

Although the bid for a place in the new league is paramount, Cox must also ensure the team finishes

the current season.

"There are a number of priorities," Cox said.

"We have to find someone to front the board and lead the charge. We also have to look for a chief executive officer."

Asked whether he would consider either role, Cox said: "I'm looking at things. I want to be involved with both (the present set-up and the new entity) but I will be happy if the new board goes out and sources the best chief executive they can find."

"My priority at present is the current team. I'll definitely get them over the line until the end of the season."

Turner would retain an operational role for the rest of this season, Cox said.

"He will step down as board chairman and be insignificant for the rest of the season. He could be on the new board but in a very minority role, if any," he said.

"We like the concept of a totally fresh start with a different set of

values."

Cox said Turner had wanted to reduce his role for a couple months and stepped down voluntarily.

Cox also welcomed the support received from New Zealand Soccer and businessmen Dave Wilson and Sam Malcolmson who attended last week's meeting and expressed some interest in taking a stake-ownership in the restructured club.



Knights have role in new comp - Cimeria

At Melbourne Knights' pre-match lunch yesterday, president Ange Cimeria insisted the club would be part of next season's competition through the new Melbourne United consortium.

One of the club's backers, Dan da Silva, also spoke yesterday, telling *The Age*: "Melbourne Knights will be part of the new competition, but in a different form which leverages their strengths and traditions."

"It's fairly clear that the new competition will be a corporate, professional game, which will require significant corporate funding moving forward."

Cimeria said, "The new consor-



tium have some great ideas.

They want our knowledge, experience, heritage and tradition. They want to use our stadium, players, coaching staff and then use us later on as a feeder.

They know that they are on to a good thing.

"I hope the new league is a great move, but we've heard it before and it hasn't happened."

"I hope Lowy's concept goes a lot further than David Hill's because Hill did a lot of damage to this game."

"The No1 for me is the survival of this club; maybe we'll be back to rejoin top company a lot earlier than people expect."

Spirit on track for takeover

NORTHERN Spirit chairman Antonio Gelonesi said the club was on track to be taken over by a new entity by year's end after a meeting with the Australian Soccer Association and liquidators.

After almost two years of spiralling debts the National Soccer League club officially went into liquidation on Friday.

But club officials deemed the move a positive one, enabling it to cut itself free from the 49 per cent ownership from Scottish club Rangers - who allegedly owe the Spirit up to \$1 million.

"We left in a positive frame of mind and worked through a lot of issues today," Gelonesi said.

"A lot of good things came out and I think we can at least reach an in principle agreement by the end of the year."

Gelonesi is expected to remain a part owner of the club and says two new northern suburbs-based businesses will also come on board as investors.

He said it was premature to speak about what amount in the dollar creditors would receive from the existing entity.

A spokesperson for the ASA described the meeting as "very positive" and said this Sunday's game between the Spirit and Olympic at OKI Stadium would go ahead.

South Melbourne lead the way

A week after the Melbourne Knights announced they could not join the new Australian soccer league, South Melbourne has said it will pursue a joint venture to push for entry.

South is in the initial stages of discussions to form an alliance that chief executive Mark Patterson said will give the club a "better than 90 per cent chance" of being one of the two Melbourne franchises in the new league.

While the name of the club and the venue would be retained for the new league, the corporate partner would have a weighty role in the administration of the club.

"I would envisage it being more than a traditional sponsorship, it would be more a joint venture where they would be supportive of our organisation and bring some expertise," Patterson said.

"South Melbourne could try to get in on its own back and maybe we'd be successful, but we believe we need to be a better organisation and stronger than that, and that requires us to put in some different aspects."

"If we did nothing and went for the bid that way, we would be a

chance but I would say only a 50-50 chance."

"If we make some changes to grow, I would say a better than 90 per cent chance."

Change is not something readily embraced by many of the establishment NSL clubs, but Patterson will seek to allay apprehensions among supporters.

"If it did happen to be a new entity, it would have very much a South Melbourne flavour to it," Patterson said.

"We know that any time there are changes it affects different people in different ways."

When the Knights announced

last week that they would become a feeder club to a Melbourne-based club in a new league, president Ange Cimeria predicted South would miss the cut in any application, but Patterson was determined to prove the doubters wrong.

"It's challenging and exciting more so than daunting - if we look at it as daunting we are looking at it in the wrong way," Patterson said.

An ace up South's sleeve is its Bob Jane Stadium, which could also host the other Melbourne franchise in the league.



South Melbourne CEO Mark Patterson has stated that the club will lead the way during next season's reformed league.

Kamasz unsure over mass NSL free agency

National League chief Stefan Kamasz refused to confirm club fears that all NSL players will become free agents at the end of the season.

Melbourne Knights director Tony Juric told the *Herald-Sun* that with the league shutting down, all contracts could be torn up: "Any player will be able to walk

away scot-free."

"It's an interesting question," NSL manager Stefan Kamasz said yesterday.

"Our current contracts don't provide for the league coming to an end."

"It does deal with relegated clubs retaining rights to their players, but this is an area the

Australian Soccer Association has to address - and it will do that."

"It's the end of the existing league. Next year will be a brand-new legal entity; a new league set up as a separate company licensed to the ASA with its own rights to run that league."

Kalac urges Aussie teammates

Perugia goalkeeper Zeljko Kalac has urged his Australia teammates not to snub any international games set down for next year.

"We all know it's going to take sacrifices for us to get to Germany in 2006 and it will take us qualifying to put the game on the map here and make the new national league a success," Kalac told the *Daily Telegraph*.

"We've got a responsibility to some extent to deliver in that area."

"I'll be there for Venezuela because we need to play these sorts of sides to progress, especially as we must face the fifth-placed South Americans to reach

the World Cup.

"My club won't like it. They are in a relegation fight and won't want me coming back to Italy two days before a big league match."

"But it's a FIFA date and they can't stop me."

"Let's face it, when it comes to World Cup qualifying in two years, the match in Venezuela will mean nothing," he admits.

"Players have to do what they think is best on an individual basis."

Kalac is in Sydney for treatment on a thigh injury, which has kept him out of the Perugia first team for six weeks.



National Soccer League



Perth Glory

6



Brisbane Strikers

1

By Richard Kreider

Previous encounters between Perth Glory and the Brisbane Strikers have almost always produced an abundance of goals and their Round 16 clash at the newly remodelled Perth Oval last Saturday proved no different in what was an enthralling fixture.

Glory were undoubtedly eager to celebrate their return to East Perth with a victory, at what is now called Members Equity Stadium, and this they did by way of an emphatic 6-1 trouncing, using six different goal scorers in the process.

Each of the goals from the defending champions was a treat to behold and would certainly have sent the 12,142 crowd home fully satiated from the evening's entertainment, as well as being pleased with the rectangular-designed venue,

which is almost complete in its first stage of an \$11 million facelift.

"There has been a lot of expectation and anticipation during the week, but what a way to kick-off the new stadium," said a delighted Glory coach Mich d'Avray.

"I think everyone who was here tonight got good value."

The convincing victory was clearly the result of a combined team effort. Despotovski, Pondeljak, Wayne Shroj and Jade North though, deserve special mention for their outstanding contribution.

Brisbane's Stuart McLaren, Louis Brain, Josh McLoughlan and Matt McKay after coming on at the start of the second half, all toiled hard without return.

"The reasonably early goal and the one just before half-time was always going to make it difficult for us from then on," said

McLaren following his worst defeat as player-coach.

"I am not going to blame the travelling or Christmas. Tonight we were beaten by a very good team who are playing well," he said. "Combined with that, was the sub-standard performance by our own players."

"Only two or three players can hold their hand up and say they did their job to a good degree of efficiency. Especially when Matty McKay came on and gave us that bit more bite when we were pushing forward."

Strikers' defender Josh McLoughlan bit too hard in the sixth minute of play with a clumsy challenge on Scott Miller that produced him the first yellow card of the game.

Right from the word go, the pace and penetration of Miller on the left side, Pondeljak through the middle and North along the right flank created plenty of

headaches for the Brisbane rearguard.

Glory's constant pressure reaped its just reward in the 26th minute when Bobby Despotovski earned himself a place in Glory's history books by scoring the first goal at the new stadium.

A lobbed ball into the Brisbane box appeared to have struck Karl Dodd on the arm and whilst everyone froze in expectation of referee Eddie Lennie pointing to the spot, Despotovski pounced on the rebound and drilled it past Scott Higgins.

A curling Despotovski free-kick in the 37th minute went to close to increasing the score when it picked out Mark Byrnes ghosting in on the back post. The defender however, could only force the ball into the side-netting with what looked like his knee.

With literally seconds remaining in the opening half, Despotovski was again involved in the match action

by sending Damian Mori on a lung-bursting run along their right.

The seasoned striker delivered the ball into the Brisbane goalmouth toward Despotovski where McLoughlan made a timely interception to deny the onrushing forward.

From the resultant corner however, a weak clearance allowed Pondeljak to attack the goal but he could only miss-kick his shot. Byrnes was the first to claim the loose ball and made no mistake in firing the ball into the roof of the net from six metres.

The second half was ten minutes old when Perth made it 3-0 with one of the best goals seen at the ground.

Brad Hassell, who was having a useful match from midfield, collected the ball midway in the Brisbane half. He punted the ball a few metres forward before running on and delivering an unstoppable missile toward the top right stanchion of the goal and ricocheting into the net.

The Glory tidal wave was momentarily halted just seconds later when defender Shaun Murphy inflicted a clumsy challenge on the

tricky David Pilic to earn the visitors a penalty. Royce Brownlie coolly slotted the ball past Jason Petkovics' right glove to reduce the deficit.

However, the two-goal buffer was restored in the 74th minute through Adrian Caceres with virtually his second touch since coming on as a substitute one minute earlier.

It was a blatant act of unselfishness on the part of Despotovski that set Caceres up to score his second goal of the season with a simple tap-in.

Mori came ever so close to being a part of the huge scorer's list two minutes further on when a weaving sprint ended with the forward releasing a fierce strike from 20 metres that rattled the far upright.

A fifth goal eventually came two minutes later from Pondeljak's searching grass-level right-side centre which found the far side of the net after Mori and Stuart McLaren both missed the ball in their dual for possession.

The Brisbane goalkeeper redeemed himself for what had so far been an ordinary showing with a superb blocking save on Mori in the

78th minute after Pondeljak had squared a pass to his feet, directly in front of the Strikers goal.

In the 82nd minute, referee Lennie ignored loud claims for a penalty on Caceres when Higgins appeared to have brought down the young striker.

The artful forward though, became involved in his team's sixth goal six minutes from time when after a strong run down the left-flank he cut the ball back to substitute Nicky Mrdja from the left-hand byeline. The lofty forward obliged by slipping the ball into the net to complete an emphatic victory.

Player Ratings

PERTH GLORY: Jason Petkovic 7, Brad Hassell 8, Shaun Murphy 7, Wayne Shroj 8, Scott Miller 8, Anthony Danze 7, Bobby Despotovski 9, Jade North 8, Mark Byrnes 8, Tom Pondeljak 8, Damian Mori 7

BRISBANE STRIKERS: Scott Higgins 6, Karl Dodd 6, Shane Stefanutto 7, Josh McLoughlan 7, Stuart McLaren 7, Peter Grierson 6, Steve Fitzsimmons 6, Royce Brownlie 6, Louis Brain 7, David Pilic 7, Josh Rose 6, Matt McKay 8 (46 min, second-half sub)



South Melbourne

2



Wollongong Wolves

3

By Alan Clark

Wollongong Wolves came to league leader South Melbourne's Bob Jane Stadium on Saturday evening and left with all three points in a three-two victory that gives Wolves recent wins against each of the top three sides in the competition, despite its own lowly ranking.

Wolves had never been behind in a high-excitement game where goalkeeper and man-of-the match Andrew Crews brought off a number of game-winning saves as South piled on the pressure throughout.

Nahuel Arrarte and Chimaobi Nwaogazi had each given Wolves the lead whilst goals from Con Boutsianis and Vaughan Coveny were each South equalisers, before substitute Tanju Balabanel scored the winner as regulation time expired.

"Once we led," said Wolves' coach John Turner,

"We were always going to sit in and cop the pressure. (South) had umpteen more chances, (but) we took ours."

"(It) was a game we dominated," said South coach Stuart Munro after the game. "We made a lot of chances. But their goalkeeper has been outstanding once again. The number of times Andrew Crews has been outstanding this season for Wollongong is just unbelievable." Wolves had disposed of Perth Glory and Parramatta Power in consecutive weeks only last month, and arrived at Bob Jane on the back of an impressive six-game unbeaten run, so Wollongong's win was scarcely a shock despite the two teams' relative positions on the ladder.

Arrarte opened the scoring twelve minutes in from a free-kick which he bent around the wall. A foolish foul had been given away by Michael Panopoulos and Steve Laurie who made an untidy double-challenge on

the edge of the penalty-area directly in front.

"We were very naive in giving away the free-kick," said Munro. "Very very naive."

Just two minutes later the Bob Jane crowd erupted in what proved temporary celebration when a Boutsianis corner crashed into the net after it came through a crowd of players. The goal was correctly disallowed on the advice of the stand-side assistant referee as the ball had been assisted in its path across the line by the hand of Coveny. The lanky Kiwi was subsequently booked for the offence.

Coveny had the opportunity to equalise legitimately a mere six minutes later from the penalty-spot after a Wolves hand-ball in the box. Although Coveny's first effort found the net, it required re-taking as a number of his team-mates had entered the area before the ball had been kicked. Coveny's second effort was palmed over the bar by

Crews who held his nerve.

South pressed constantly throughout the balance of the half in search of the equaliser, but the Wolves' defence held firm. Wing-backs Simon Storey and Sam Poutakidis saw as much of the ball as they ever would have this season as they linked with the relentless attacks.

Shortly before the interval, Storey crafted two excellent chances - one a solo-effort long-range shot from 30 metres after cutting in from the left which whistled by Crews' right hand post.

Storey's second was as supplier which surely deserved a more productive finish than befell it. Massimo Murodca fed a pass to Storey on the left-wing. Storey's cross was lofted to the edge of the six-yard box where

Coveny rose highest to head across the face of goal to Boutsianis. Boutsianis' header flashed just over the bar with Crews well beaten.

The second half continued in a similar vein, but with Wolves compelled to make an early substitution.

Stewart van Benthum had to leave the field with a wrist fracture. Replacing van Benthum was the experienced Jason van Blerk, returning to Australia after more than ten years plying his trade in the professional leagues of Europe.

Waves of South pressure eventually told just before the second half's mid-point. A high-ball played into the forward edge of the six-yard box was nodded on by Coveny to Boutsianis whose header found the top corner of the net.

South had some useful chances to take the lead, notably through Michael Curcija, and it seemed only a matter of time before the inevitable goal came. But South's efforts at the attacking end of the ground left resources scarce at the back, and a quick Wolves' break earned the visitors a corner, taken by Arrarte.

Arrarte found Nigerian import Nwaogazi inexplicably in space just beyond the penalty-spot. His volley crashed into the net to give the striker a club record of six consecutive games in which he has scored. "He works hard off the ball," said

Turner. "But he's got a very clever head and takes his chances when he gets in front of goal."

South again pressed and Crews pulled off a series of fine saves - perhaps the best from a Coveny header after a Storey cross.

But the drama was not yet over. South equalised yet again with just ten minutes left to play. A cross from the right was finally converted by a Boutsianis header to set up a cliff-hanger conclusion.

As South continued to press, Wolves' coach decided to withdraw Nwaogazi and replace him with Balabanel a speedier frontman who Turner thought could exploit defensive gaps left by South.

The move paid off. As the game went into its final minutes, a swift Wolves break had the ball played rapidly to Balabanel who ran direct on goal, chased by South defenders. As Balabanel shot, it took a deflection, wrong-footing South goalkeeper Eugene Galekovic, and finding the net at the near post.

"It's a sore way to lose a game," said Munro. "But we did our job as far as creating goal-scoring opportunities - (but) we didn't get them."

It was to prove the final

goal of the game, although South can feel lucky to have escaped an added-time goal from a van Blerk free-kick 30 metres out which hit the back of the net but was disallowed as the referee had not signalled the kick to be taken after having asked for the kick to be delayed until his signal.

The Wolves have once again proved that they can beat the best of teams after claiming the head of South Melbourne.

Parramatta Power and Perth Glory were the Wolves other victims.

One message is clear though, Beware of the Wolves!

Player Ratings

SOUTH MELBOURNE: (4-2) Galekovic (7), Poutakidis (8), Kovacevic (7), Laurie (6), Storey (9), Coveny (8), Panopoulos (7), Murodca (8), Boutsianis (7), Curcija (7), Tunbridge (7) (Trimboli 61 (7)).

Subs: Durakovic, Recchia, Theoklitis (GK).

WOLLONGONG WOLVES: (3-5-2) Crews (9), Dragas (7), Blake (7), Lyons (7), Cummins (7), Arrarte (8), Hughes (7), Hawrysiuk (7) (Wells 85), Van Benthum (7) (Van Blerk 54 (7)), Young (8), Nwaogazi (7) (Balabanel 80). Subs: Arcaba (GK).



National Soccer League



Sydney Olympic

1



Northern Spirit

0

By Peter Damalas

Sydney Olympic secured their fourth victory of the season thanks to a Michael Baird penalty, to leapfrog their opponents the Northern Spirit on the National Soccer League ladder.

Baird coolly steered home a penalty early in the second half after substitute Zenon Caravella was felled by Spirit right back, Mark Milligan.

It was Olympic's second victory at home, the first also a single goal victory over another local rival in Sydney United in which Baird was the goalscorer.

Coach Peter Papanikitas again shuffled his pack, opting to drop out of sorts striker Pablo Cardozo to the bench. His tinkering with the formation saw George Goutzioulis partner Jim Bakis up front, with Baird switched to the right flank.

The move allowed play-

maker Troy Halpin more room in which to operate, and his excellent distribution helped open up the play in the first half.

His attempted wall pass fell kindly for Bakis, whose close range effort was well saved by Spirit goalkeeper Paul Henderson. A free kick from the left flank minutes later was headed wide by Baird on the far post.

Olympic had the upper hand in the first half, particularly in midfield as Augerinos, Fyfe and Halpin provided both stiffness and creativity to the side.

Spirit forward Dylan Macallister was the one thorn in Olympic's side.

The Olyroo hopeful used his muscular frame to hold off the challenges of Paul Kohler to flash a cross from the right across the face of goal beyond the reach of strike partner Stewart Petrie in the ninth minute. Macallister played a typical target man's knock, often

playing without support from midfield and having to barge his way into goalscoring opportunities.

Northern Spirit took the game to their hosts in the second half, very much like their encounter earlier in the season in which the Spirit scored four times after the break.

The forced substitution of Halpin at half time, after he received a knock from Ian Ferguson on the half hour, was a bonus for the away team.

However, it was Olympic that opened the scoring early in the second half when Caravella was tripped by Milligan in the box in the 46th minute. Baird placed the ball to the right of Henderson to give the home side the lead.

The introduction of Cardozo came at an important time as Northern Spirit began creating chances, with Richter coming closest with a fierce drive on 52 minutes.

Cardozo had a point to prove, and his first effort at goal, a left foot shot from distance, cannoned off the crossbar.

In fact, it was an inspiring day for Olympic's three substitutes. Predrag Bojic made the most of his opportunity on the right flank to cause some havoc, volleying

directly at goal after Hiroyuki Ishida had made a break down the left.

But it was Cardozo who caused Spirit coach Lawrie McKinna more concern. His free kick on 73 minutes curled around the wall and was tipped away by Henderson, and he went close to making the game

safe in the final few minutes.

This match was of vital importance for the two sides as they attempt to keep up with the teams in the top six.

Both Olympic and the Spirit are involved in local derbies this weekend, away to Sydney United and home to Marconi respectively, and

these matches are shaping up as do or die affairs in terms of top six qualification.

Olympic seem to have a settled defence and midfield and may re-introduce Cardozo in the starting line up after his stellar performance off the bench.

Northern Spirit on the other hand will need to provide more support for Macallister and Petrie in attack if they are to get their season back on track in the coming weeks.



Olympic's Hiro Ishida (Left) shown battling with Spirit target-man and hopeful Olyroo candidate Dylan Macallister during last week's Sydney derby outing at OKI Jubilee Oval.

Players Rating

SYDNEY OLYMPIC:

Hughes (7), Souris (7), Kohler (7), Juric (7), Fyfe (7.5), Halpin (7.5), Bakis (7), Augerinos (7), Baird (7.5), Goutzioulis (6.5), Ishida (6.5).

SUBS: Cardozo (7), Bojic (7), Caravella (6.5).

NORTHERN SPIRIT:

Henderson (7), O'Sullivan (6), Spencer (6.5), Tomasevic (6), Ferguson (6), Macallister (7.5), Richter (7), Hutchinson (6), Petrie (6), Wilkinson (7), Milligan (6).

SUBS: Kwasnik (6), Fisher (6), Baveas (6).



Newcastle United

0



Marconi Stallions

1

By Pano Tagaroulas

Newcastle United's top six aspirations were dealt a serious blow as the Novocastrians slumped to their fourth home loss of the season at the hands of Marconi.

A 29th minute tap in from Brad Maloney was enough to secure all three points for Marconi as United once again struggled in the attacking third. The home side failed to trouble a well-organised Marconi defence with chances coming few and far between.

Ian Crook made just one change to his starting eleven with Peter Tsekenis returning from suspension in place of Thomas Libbesson. Meanwhile Marconi coach Jean-Paul De Marigny made no changes to his starting line-up despite their recent poor form.

Marconi always looked the more likely side to find the opening goal and they threatened United right from the start. In the 4th minute the United defence failed to

clear a Marconi cross and gifted possession to Alex Brosque. The young Socceroo's tame shot looked to be an easy save for Tom Willis but the Newcastle keeper let the ball slip through his arms before desperately regathering the ball on the goal line.

The game's solitary goal arrived on 29 minutes with Marconi capitalising on some poor defending from the home side. Brosque used his pace and skill to beat two United defenders before cutting the ball back from the byline for Brad Maloney. The experienced midfielder was unmarked in the six-yard box and had no trouble finding the back of the net to give his side a 1-0 advantage.

Marconi created all the best chances of the first half with Newcastle never threatening the away side's solid defence. On 39 minutes Marconi could have doubled their lead when a Nick Carle free kick picked out the run of Brosque on the near post. The pacy striker flicked the

ball on towards goal only to see his effort saved by United custodian Tom Willis.

United were unlucky not to be awarded a penalty on the stroke of half time as Ryan Griffiths appeared to be fouled in the box. However, referee Brett Hugo instead booked Griffiths for diving much to the dismay of United coach Ian Crook who said, "The ref I thought was so below average it was frightening."

"I don't think he had control of it from the 1st minute to the 90th," added Crook.

The second half continued in the same vain as the first with United only managing to create the odd half chance. On 54 minutes a Scott Thomas cross from the left found Griffiths in the box who once again failed to hit the target as his header was glanced well wide.

Ian Crook was disappointed with his side's inability to create chances saying, "We didn't even get in the positions to score."

The match reached boil-

ing point on 73 minutes when Craig Deans and Alex Brosque clashed in United's half before a melee involving all twenty-two players occurred. Deans was lucky to receive only a yellow card while Brosque escaped punishment all together.

A similar incident occurred again on 78 minutes after a rash challenge from Scott Thomas on Joe Spiteri. Referee Brett Hugo was again lenient issuing a yellow card to Scott Thomas.

The home side did come close to finding an equaliser in injury time when Marconi goalkeeper Michael

Turnbull spilled a long ball into the path of Jobe Wheelhouse. However, the young Socceroo's shot was deflected off the goal line by Angelo Costanzo, preserving Marconi's 1-0 lead.

Marconi was the better side on the night and deserved to take all three points which keeps the Sydney based club in the hunt for a top six berth.

Both sides are now level on twenty points with Marconi having a game in hand over United.

Newcastle boss Ian Crook was unhappy with his sides recent performances especially in this match as he said, "Tonight's probably the most disappointing."

"We lost the game in the first half," explained Crook.

Meanwhile Marconi coach Jean-Paul De Marigny was pleased with his side's efforts saying, "I thought the boys did really

well the first forty-five."

"The boys showed tremendous character in the second half," said De Marigny.

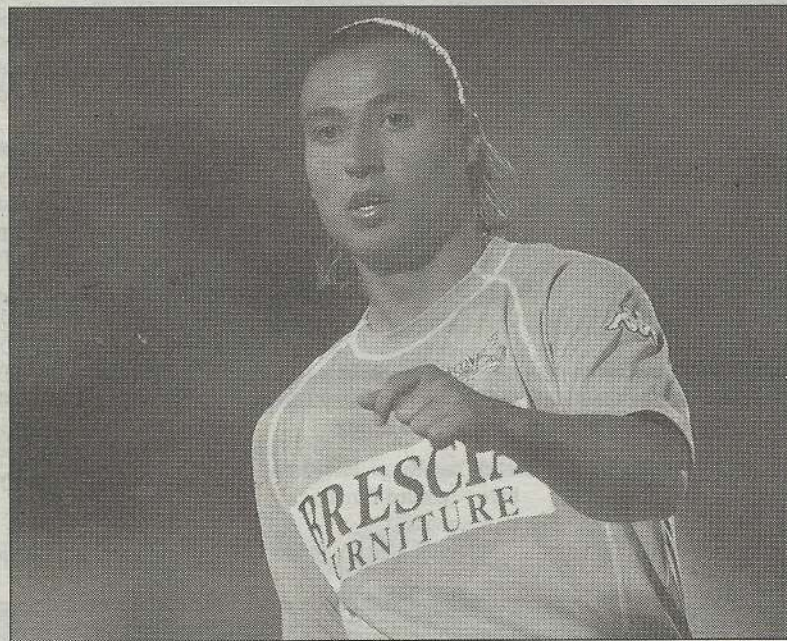
"The boys are getting what they deserve," the Marconi coach added.

De Marigny was pleased that his side moved back into top six contention saying, "We're back in the mix for now."

"Both teams now are trying to survive for the top six," explained De Marigny.

Crook admitted that his side lacked the cutting edge up front and said, "We're not scoring."

"If you don't score you don't win," summed up Crook.



Nick Carle bagged the plaudits for the Stallions in a man of the match display against Newcastle United last week.

Players Rating

NEWCASTLE UNITED:

T Willis (6), C Deans (8), S Thomas (5), G Owens (8.2), M Wilson (8.2), R Griffiths (5), M Johnson (6.2), P Tsekenis (7), J Mitchell (5), E Masi (6), P McPherson (6).

SUBS: B Kennedy (6), M Blagojevic (8.2), J Wheelhouse (6.2), T Libbesson (8.2), 6.

MARCONI STALLIONS:

M Turnbull (6), S Bell (7), A Costanzo (8), L Casserly (6), G Last (7), J Spiteri (8.2), B Maloney (7), A Brosque (7), M Fhwaite (6), N Carle (8), B Renaud (6).

SUBS: S Alogdellis (6), S Webb, T Brodie, J Harris (8.2), 6.



National Soccer League



	Adelaide United	2
	Melbourne Knights	1

ADELAIDE United strengthened its finals drive with a determined win over the lowly Melbourne Knights at Hindmarsh Stadium last weekend.

United applied the blow torch to the Knights' defence after going behind to a Kris Trajanovski goal in just the fourth minute and climbed to fourth spot on the NSL ladder.

The goal-shy Knights shocked Adelaide as experienced Trajanovski ran onto a hopeful long ball from Daniel Vasilevski and poked it past the advancing goalkeeper David Scarsella.

But United took over by half-time with goals from leading scorer Carl Veart and midfielder David Terminello, starting for the first time this season.

The return of captain Aurelio Vidmar from suspension meant United had its most experienced pairing in attack with Veart and it paid off.

Veart rose high to head home a Richie Alagich cross from the right in the 15th minute to settle United nerves after forcing a series of corners.

The former Socceroo's seventh goal of the season signalled United's surge though Scarsella had to save a fierce header from Trajanovski in the 30th minute at his near post.

Terminello pounced on a break a minute later when Ross Aloisi released him on the edge of the area and he struck a left shot past the Knights' hapless keeper Wilson Knezevic for 2-1.

Knezevic then made a string of heroic saves to keep the Knights from a mauling.

He got a hand while on the ground to stop a shot from Shane Thompson in the 37th minute and saved shots on target on Aaron Westervelt in the 58th minute and a Veart volley from close range in the 72nd minute.

United couldn't find the net again with Veart firing over the bar in good positions twice and substitute Nick Budin also grazing a post in the 90th minute when put.

Despite the misses United cruised to its fourth win in its past five matches and stretched its unbeaten run to seven games <<http://go-acct.com/?go=games>>.

Source - AAP



Former Socceroo Carl Veart was Adelaide's goal scorer in their two-one win over the Melbourne Knights.

	Kingz	1
	Parramatta Power	2

ABATTLING Football Kingz notched its eleventh loss in 14 NSL matches this season at Waikato Stadium on Sunday, dropping a result to Parramatta.

The Power moved to within two points of second-placed Perth Glory in the NSL thanks to the win over the bottom-placed Kingz.

But the injury-stricken Kingz - sporting a makeshift back three of Jason Rowley, Mauro Donoso and Espen Scherven, while goalkeeper Michael Utting was again sidelined with an ankle injury - can take heart from the way they competed against one of the most talented teams in the league.

The Kingz managed just eight shots to Parramatta's 22, but showed plenty of fight and generally did their credibility no harm in front of a crowd of 1100.

However, the result was all too familiar for Kingz coach Tommy Mason, despite the entertaining spectacle. Parramatta took a 20th minute lead following a schoolboy error from Scherven.

The Norwegian import coughed up possession to Parramatta's Saso Petrovski, who fed a perfect ball to

amends when he lost his marker and levelled from a bread-and-butter header from six metres in the 33rd minute, nodding home a Chris Jackson free kick.

In the 62nd minute Fernando Rech restored the lead for Parramatta with a clinical finish.

Ante Milicic picked up his clever run to the left of goal with a short ball and Rech burst through to tuck it away.

Craig Wyllie, in his first start in 18 months for the Kingz, and Paul Harries retired injured in the 42nd minute.

Mason was forced to use his third substitute, Chad Coombes, before half-time when replacement Aleksander Midtsian lasted just three minutes.

The Kingz could perhaps have been awarded a penalty for hand ball in the 31st minute, while Tallan Martin had an early shot cleared off the line.

But on the balance of play Parramatta was a worthy winner, with Rech, Petrovski and Ahmad Elrich standout performers.

Best for the Kingz was the typically consistent Harry Ngata.

when the Kingz looked to have weathered Parramatta's early assaults.

Scherven quickly made



Power's German import Andre Gumprecht was inspirational in his side's tricky two-one away win against bottom club the Football Kingz.

Andre Gumprecht to neatly bury it in the corner of the net from 15m.

The goal came at a time

CROOK OR O'CONNOR FOR YOUTH JOB?

It is believed that current Newcastle United coach Ian Crook and AIS Head-Coach Steve O'Connor are in the running for the U17 & U20 Australian coaching positions.

Current coach Ange Postecoglou has been put under fire of late with his recent Australian squads failing to make a decent semi-final or quarter-final showing.

It is not known whether Ange will be there for the new year however the former South Melbourne coach did state to ABSW that he still wants to continue coaching under the new ASA regime.

Many soccer pundits have O'Connor as a firm favourite to land the job if it does appear vacant due to his outstanding duties as AIS' head coach for the past few years.

The former Socceroo has developed a number of current Australian stars both here and abroad and has had the in-depth knowledge of the world game at youth level.

Crook on the other hand has also been a keen coaching developer and this has shown through his current squad Newcastle.

The majority of his squad is built up of players under the age of 21.

2004 could herald a new beginning for the Australian game in terms of the development of the new Australian league but it could also see a re-vamp of the coaching system at National level.

Disappointment with Cimera

By Brendon Davis

Knight's President Ange Cimera used his pre match presidents address last week to take a parting shot at his cross town rivals saying he expects South Melbourne will fail to make the reformed ASA.

South Officials were disappointed that Cimera, who is unaware of the progress being made by South, one official told ABSW it was "bitter and vindictive frustration" from the Knights chief.

And this official pointed out the Knights have had a web link to the story detailing the appointment of the Northern Spirit's Administrator prominently displayed on their web site all week despite the Knights always confining their web site to their club news.

Over the last week South have unveiled two significant new sponsorships, with waste removal firm Collex and Australian owned food company Musashi.

Most South people were genuinely saddened by the news of the Knights demise, the rivalries, the great derbies the excitement of before every Knights and South game is something Victorian Soccer anxiously awaits each season.

Ange Cimera has made a valuable contribution to Victorian Soccer - last Sundays speech was one of the low points.

BYE - SYDNEY UNITED



National Soccer League



After Round 16	TOTAL							PTS	HOME						AWAY					
	P	W	D	L	Bye	F	A		P	W	D	L	F	A	P	W	D	L	F	A
SOUTH MELBOURNE	14	9	2	4	2	33	13	29	8	6	0	2	22	9	7	3	2	2	11	4
PERTH GLORY	13	9	1	3	2	29	15	28	3	3	0	0	10	1	10	6	1	3	19	14
PARRAMATTA POWER	15	8	2	4	1	30	15	26	6	4	1	1	18	4	8	4	1	3	12	11
ADELAIDE UNITED	13	5	6	2	1	15	14	23	7	3	3	1	9	8	5	2	2	1	7	6
BRISBANE STRIKERS	15	6	5	4	1	19	20	23	7	4	3	0	12	6	8	2	2	4	7	14
SYDNEY UNITED	13	6	4	3	2	12	7	22	7	3	2	2	9	6	6	3	2	1	3	1
NEWCASTLE UTD	16	5	5	6	1	17	18	20	10	4	2	4	10	8	5	1	3	2	7	10
MARCONI STALLIONS	15	5	5	5	1	17	19	20	8	3	2	3	7	8	7	2	3	2	10	11
WOLLONGONG WOLVES	14	5	3	6	1	18	24	18	7	2	2	3	9	12	7	3	1	3	9	12
SYDNEY OLYMPIC	15	4	5	6	1	12	20	17	9	2	4	3	6	10	6	2	2	2	6	10
NORTHERN SPIRIT	15	5	1	9	1	21	23	16	7	3	1	3	15	11	8	2	0	6	6	12
MELBOURNE KNIGHTS	14	3	2	9	1	10	26	11	6	0	2	4	3	12	8	3	0	5	7	14
KINGZ	14	1	2	11	1	13	33	5	8	1	0	7	8	17	6	0	2	4	5	16

SOUTH MELBOURNE 2
(C Boutsianis 68', C Veart 18')

WOLLONGONG WOLVES 3
(N Arrarte 11', C C Nwaogazi 76', T Balabanal 90')

Referee: Crowd.Venue: Bob Jane Stadium.

Teams: South Melbourne:

Subs Not Used:

Wollongong Wolves:

Subs Not Used:

Cautions:

***Note: Details of these stats could not be announced.**

SYDNEY OLYMPIC 1
(M Baird 47' pen)

NORTHERN SPIRIT 0

Referee: Mark Shield. Crowd: 2,484.Venue: OKI Jubilee Oval.

Teams: SYDNEY OLYMPIC: Hughes, Souris, Kohler, Juric, Fyfe, Halpin (Caravella 46'), Bakis, Augerinos (Cardozo 57'), Baird, Goutzioulis (Bojic 61'), Ishida.

Subs Not Used: Moss (gk)

NORTHERN SPIRIT: Henderson, O'Sullivan, Spencer, Tomasevic (Baveas 66'), Ferguson, Macallister (Fisher 69'), Richter (Kwasnik 75'), Hutchinson, Petrie, Wilkinson, Milligan.

Subs Not Used: Page (gk).

Cautions: B Hughes (SO) 57', I Fyfe (SO) 78', P Bojic (SO) 87', I Ferguson (NS) 33'.

PLAYER OF THE WEEK



Chima Nwaogazi
(Wollongong Wolves)

The Nigerian goal machine last week again proved that his rush of scoring goals was no fluke by adding his sixth goal in his last six appearances against NSL League Leaders South Melbourne.

Wollongong's new gun striker was on song yet again scoring his side's second goal in their three-two win.

The question on everyone's lips is how long can Chima's goal scoring spree go for? John Turner would be hoping until the NSL Finals Series.

NEWCASTLE UNITED 0

MARCONI STALLIONS 1
(B Maloney 29')

Referee: Brett Hugo. Crowd: 3,084.Venue: EnergyAustralia Stadium.

Teams: NEWCASTLE UNITED: Willis, Deans, Thomas, Owens (Blagojevic 83'), Wilson (Libbesson 83'), R Griffiths, Johnson (Wheelhouse 62'), Tsekenis, Mitchell, Masi, McPherson.

Subs Not Used: Kennedy (gk).

MARCONI STALLIONS: Turnbull, Bell, Costanzo, Casserly, Last, Spiteri (Harris 83'), Maloney, Brosque, Thwaite, Carle, Renaud.

Subs Not Used: Webb, Brodie, Alogdellis (gk).

Cautions: R Griffiths (NU) 45', C Deans (NU) 73', S Thomas (NU) 77', A Costanzo (MS) 65'.

ADELAIDE UNITED 2
(C Veart 15', D Terminello 31')

MELBOURNE KNIGHTS 1
(K Trajanovski 4')

Referee: Simon Micallef. Crowd: 13,032. Venue: Hindmarsh Stadium.

Teams: ADELAIDE UNITED: Scarsella, Alagich, Rees, Goulding, Valkanis, Aloisi, Terminello (Smeltz 78'), Veart (Pellegrino 81'), Vidmar (Budin 74'), Thompson, Westervelt.

Subs Not Used: Crossley (gk).

MELBOURNE KNIGHTS: Knezevic, R Vargas, Marth, Vasilevski (Natsioulas 78'), Sabljak (A Vargas 70'), Razov, Leijer, Pelikan (Buljan 62'), Pantelidis, Trajanovski, Marinos.

Subs Not Used: Tomich (gk).

Cautions: C Veart (AU) 20', N Marinos (MK) 38'.

KINGZ 1
(E Schjerven 34')

PARRAMATTA POWER 2
(A Gumprecht 20', F Rech 62')

Referee: Craig Zetter. Crowd: 1,176. Venue: Waikato Stadium Hamilton.

Teams: KINGZ: Nicholson, Rayner, Jackson, Campbell, Ngata, Rowley, Donoso, Schjerven, Harries (Scott 42'), Martin, Wylie (Midtsian 42') (Coombes 44').

Subs Not Used: Williams

PARRAMATTA POWER: Bolton, Colosimo (Sekulovski 87'), Beauchamp, Thompson, Dodd (O'Grady 80'), Gumprecht, Milicic, Rech (Zorbas 78'), Petrovski, Sobczyk, Elrich.

Subs Not Used: Vukovic (gk).

Cautions: C Jackson (FK) 80'.

PERTH GLORY 6
(B Despotovski 26', M Byrnes 45', B Hassell 55', A Caceres 74', T Pondeljask 76', N Mrdja 84')

BRISBANE STRIKERS 1
(R Brownlie 55' pen)

Referee: Eddie Lennie. Crowd: 12,142.Venue: Members Equity Stadium.

Teams: PERTH GLORY: Petkovic, Hassell, Murphy, Srhoj (Bingley 61'), Miller, Danze (Caceres 73'), Despotovski, North, Byrnes, Pondeljask, Mori (Mrdja 78'). Subs Not Used: Matassa (gk).

BRISBANE STRIKERS: Higgins, Dodd, Stefanutto, McCloughan, McLaren (Heath 78'), Grierson, Fitzsimmons, Brownlie (Hilton 73'), Brain, Pilic, Rose (McKay 46'). Subs Not Used: Watson (gk).

Cautions: S Miller (PG) 57', S Fitzsimmons (BS) 6'.

ROUND 17

Fri 2-1-04

Parramatta Power vs Newcastle Utd

Sat 3-1-04

Brisbane Strikers vs South Melbourne

Perth Glory vs Football Kingz

Sun 4-1-04

Sydney United vs Sydney Olympic

Northern Spirit vs Marconi Stallions

Wollongong Wolves vs Melbourne Knights

Adelaide Utd - Bye

LEADING GOALSCORERS

Name	Club	Total
MILICIC Ante	Parramatta	11
COVENY Vaughan	Sth Melbourne	10
CURCIJA Michael	South Melbourne	9
MORI Damian	Perth Glory	8
PETRIE Stewart	Northern Spirit	7
VEART Carl	Adelaide Utd	7
PONDELJAK Tom	Perth Glory	6
DESPOTOVSKI Bobby	Perth Glory	6
NWAOGAZI Chima	Wollongong Wolves	6

BYE - SYDNEY UNITED



ENGLISH



MIDDLESBROUGH0 MANCHESTER UTD1

United never hit top gear at the Riverside but still proved too strong for Boro, despite having midfielder Darren Fletcher sent off in the second half.

Boro defender Danny Mills deflected in a shot from South Africa midfielder Quinton Fortune on 14 minutes that left keeper Mark Schwarzer stranded.

Schwarzer brilliantly tipped a shot from Paul Scholes on to the bar, but United had to withstand late pressure after Fletcher was dismissed in the 65th minute for a second bookable offence.

CHELSEA3 PORTSMOUTH0

Chelsea made up for a drab first half with three strikes after the break that helped banish the memory of Friday's embarrassing 4-2 drubbing by Charlton Athletic.

Romanian Adrian Mutu and Icelandic strike partner Eidur Gudjohnsen missed chances, while Frank Lampard hit the post as Chelsea faltered in the opening 45 minutes.

But Wayne Bridge rifled home his first league goal for the Blues in the 65th minute and Lampard hit the second off Mutu's through-ball. A superb dipping volley from outside the area gave Cameroon midfielder Geremi his first goal for Chelsea in the 82nd minute.

NEWCASTLE UTD0 BLACKBURN1

Newcastle's hopes of going fourth were dashed by a combination of poor defending and missed chances.

Skipper Alan Shearer headed wide and Michael Chopra had an effort ruled offside in the first half, while Peruvian forward Norbert Solano scuffed a great chance after the break.

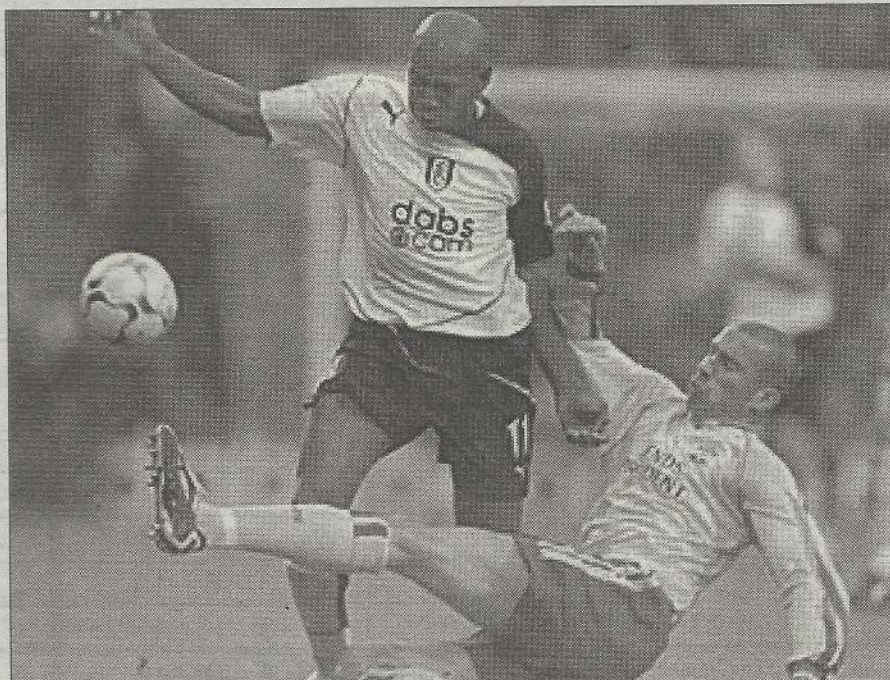
But Paul Gallagher bundled home a cross from Socceroo Brett Emerton for Rovers in the 72nd minute, despite a protest for handball.

The win was soured with the news midfielder Barry Ferguson will miss the rest of the season after suffering a knee injury.

ASTON VILLA3 FULHAM0

Villa's revival continued under David O'Leary as they secured their mid-table place after a spell in the relegation zone.

Fulham looked more comfortable on the ball but on-form Colombian striker Juan Pablo Angel scored his sixth goal in seven games in all competitions to put Villa ahead in the 33rd minute from



Southampton defender Danny Higginbotham (right) slides in on Fulham's Luis Boa Morte.

Jlloyd Samuel's cross. Villa's usually goal-shy striker Darius Vassell scored twice after the break to seal the win.

BOLTON2 LEICESTER CITY2

A miserable Christmas continued for Bolton, beaten 3-1 by Liverpool on Boxing Day and denied a win against Leicester by a stoppage time equaliser.

Bolton's Spanish defender Ivan Campo was caught in possession after a poor clearance and Leicester striker Marcus Bent fired home, only for French defender Bruno N'Gotty to scramble home a 33rd minute equaliser from a Youri Djorkaeff free kick.

Campo made amends for his earlier blunder by firing home a Djorkaeff cross in the 54th minute — but there was still time for Les Ferdinand to come off the bench to score Leicester's second.

TOTTENHAM0 CHARLTON1

Tottenham dominated first-half possession and created plenty of chances, only to be floored by Charlton Cole's sucker punch.

Spurs made a flying start and only sharp saves by Charlton keeper Dean Kiely denied Robbie Keane and Frederic Kanoute from point blank range, while Rohan Ricketts blazed another chance wide. But they were caught out in the 69th minute when Cole, on loan from Chelsea, was left to head in a corner.

WOLVERHAMPTON3 LEEDS UTD1

A double from Norway striker Steffen Iversen gave bottom side Wolves their first league win for two months and inflicted a first defeat in six games on Leeds under caretaker boss Eddie Gray.

Debt-ridden Leeds, who go into 2004 second bottom, went ahead on three minutes through Michael Duberry's header but Wolves quickly replied thanks to a spectacular own goal by striker Alan Smith, who lashed Henri Camara's corner into his own net under little pressure.

Iversen headed the hosts ahead just after half-time and added a third in the final minute. Leeds defender Dominic Matteo was sent off for a bad foul on Lee Naylor midway through the second half.

EVERTON1 BIRMINGHAM CITY0

Everton continued to climb away from trouble after Wayne Rooney's goal secured their third win in four games.

The England striker came on as a second half

substitute to thump home the only goal on 69 minutes, his third goal in his last four games.

MANCHESTER CITY2 LIVERPOOL2

City extended their winless run to 11 league games stretching back to November 1 but rescued a point in the final minute when former Liverpool frontman Robbie Fowler toe-poked home.

Kevin Keegan's side dominated the first half and led through Nicolas Anelka's penalty on the half-hour, the Frenchman also scoring against his former side.

Liverpool improved after the break and levelled on 66 minutes through Vladimir Smicer, before German midfielder Dietmar Hamann volleyed a superb second 10 minutes from time, only for Fowler to save City late on.



Blackburn defender Markus Babbel celebrates the first of his two goals against Middlesbrough at Ewood Park on Boxing Day.

FIXTURES

Wednesday 7th January

Aston Villa	v	Portsmouth
Bolton	v	Man Utd
Chelsea	v	Liverpool
Everton	v	Arsenal
Man City	v	Charlton
Middlesbrough	v	Fulham
Newcastle	v	Leeds
Southampton	v	Leicester
Tottenham	v	Birmingham
Wolverhampton	v	Blackburn

PREMIER LEAGUE

Aston Villa 3 Fulham 0, Bolton 2 Leicester 2, Chelsea 3 Portsmouth 0, Everton 1 Birmingham 0, Manchester City 2 Liverpool 2, Middlesbrough 0 Manchester Utd 1, Newcastle Utd 0 Blackburn 1, Tottenham 3 Charlton 1, Wolverhampton 3 Leeds Utd 1, (Southampton vs Arsenal - Tuesday AEDT).

Boxing Day

Arsenal 3 Wolverhampton 0, Birmingham City 2 Manchester City 1, Blackburn 2 Middlesbrough 2, Charlton 4 Chelsea 2, Fulham 2 Southampton 0, Leeds Utd 0 Aston Villa 0, Leicester City 1 Newcastle Utd 1, Liverpool 3 Bolton 1, Manchester Utd 3 Everton 2, Portsmouth 2 Tottenham 0.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Man Utd	19	15	1	3	38	13	46
Arsenal	18	12	6	0	34	12	42
Chelsea	19	13	3	3	36	16	42
Charlton	19	8	6	5	27	22	30
Fulham	19	8	4	7	30	26	28
Liverpool	18	7	5	6	28	21	26
Newcastle	19	6	8	5	26	22	26
Southampton	18	7	5	6	18	14	26
Birmingham	18	7	5	6	16	20	26
Aston Villa	19	6	6	7	19	23	24
Everton	19	6	5	8	23	25	23
Bolton	19	5	8	6	20	28	23
Man City	19	5	6	8	27	27	21
Blackburn	19	6	3	10	26	29	21
Middlesbrough	18	5	6	7	14	18	21
Portsmouth	19	5	4	10	20	28	19
Leicester	19	4	6	9	28	31	18
Tottenham	19	5	3	11	19	29	18
Leeds	19	4	5	10	18	40	17
Wolverhampton	18	3	5	10	16	39	14

FIRST DIVISION

Bradford 1 Coventry 0, Burnley 0 Stoke 1, Derby 0 Norwich 4, Ipswich 1 Crystal Palace 3, Millwall 1 Gillingham 2, Nottingham Forest 0 West Ham 2, Preston 0 Crewe 0, Rotherham 0 Sunderland 2, Sheffield Utd 1 Wigan 1, Walsall 1 Reading 1, Watford 2 Cardiff 1, (Wimbledon vs West Brom - Wednesday AEDT).

Boxing Day

Cardiff 0 Walsall 1, Coventry 0 Sheffield Utd 1, Crewe 3 Burnley 1, Crystal Palace 0 Millwall 1, Gillingham 1 Watford 0, Norwich 1 Nottingham Forest 0, Reading 0 Wimbledon 3, Stoke 1 Preston 1, Sunderland 3 Bradford 0, West Bromwich 1 Derby 1, West Ham 1 Ipswich 2, Wigan 1 Rotherham 2.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Norwich	26	15	7	4	41	21	52
West Brom	25	13	7	5	36	22	46
Sheff Utd	25	13	6	6	39	27	45
Sunderland	26	12	8	6	34	22	44
Ipswich	26	12	6	8	46	38	42
Wigan	26	11	9	6	35	28	42
West Ham	26	10	11	5	35	23	41
Preston	26	11	7	8	39	30	40
Reading	26	11	5	10	30	33	38
Millwall	26	9	9	8	29	26	36
Crewe	26	10	6	10	32	32	36
Cardiff	26	9	8	9	42	35	35
Walsall	26	9	8	9	28	27	35
Stoke	26	9	6	11	33	34	33
Gillingham	25	9	6	10	31	37	33
Rotherham	26	8	9	9	24	32	33
Coventry	26	7	11	8	30	32	32
Crystal Palace	26	8	7	11	32	40	31
Watford	26	7	8	11	28	34	29
Notm Forest	25	7	7	11	34	35	28
Burnley	26	7	7	12	37	47	28
Derby	25	5	9	11	25	41	24
Bradford	26	5	5	16	20	39	20
Wimbledon	25	5	2	18	27	52	17

SECOND DIVISION

Barnsley 0 Chesterfield 1, Bristol City 2 Bournemouth 0, Luton 2 Notts County 0, Oldham 0 Hartlepool 2, Peterborough 0 Grimsby 0, Plymouth 2 Brentford 0, Port Vale 2 Stockport 2, QPR 2 Colchester 0, Swindon 2 Brighton 1, Tranmere 2 Sheff Wed 2, Wrexham 4 Blackpool 2, Wycombe 0 Rushden & Diamonds 2.

Boxing Day

Blackpool 2 Tranmere 1, Bournemouth 0 Plymouth 2, Brentford 1 Bristol 2, Brighton 4 Wycombe 0, Chesterfield 2 Peterborough 1, Colchester 1 Luton 1, Grimsby 3 Oldham 3, Hartlepool 1 Barnsley 2, Notts County 3 QPR 3, Rushden & Diamonds 2 Swindon 0, Sheff Wed 2 Port Vale 3, Stockport 0 Wrexham 1.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Plymouth	24	14	7	3	52	25	49
QPR	24	12	9	3	45	20	45
Bristol City	24	10	10	4	31	19	40
Barnsley	24	11	7	6	32	28	40
Brighton	24	11	5	8	37	27	38
Wrexham	23	11	4	8	29	24	37
Luton	24	10	7	7	37	35	37
Port Vale	23	10	6	7	32	30	36
Colchester	24	10	6	8	27	31	36
Hartlepool	24	9	8	7	36	30	35
Rushden & D'monds	24	10	5	9	41	36	35
Swindon	24	9	7	8	33	30	34
Blackpool	23	10	3	10	29	33	33
Bournemouth	24	8	8	8	28	29	32
Tranmere	24	7	9	8	26	34	30
Grimsby	23	7	8	8	28	31	29



Thierry Henry waves to the crowd after bagging a brace in Arsenal's 3-0 Boxing Day win over Wolverhampton.

SCOTLAND

CELTIC6
HIBERNIAN0

Chris Sutton and John Hartson both scored twice as Celtic hit 10-man Hibernian for six at Parkhead.

After Sutton had fired Celtic ahead, referee Alan Freeland harshly dismissed Derek Riordan for a rash challenge on Jackie McNamara, which sparked a flurry of goals and ended Hibs' hopes.

Swede Henrik Larsson and Stilian Petrov also scored as Celtic avenged their CIS Insurance Cup defeat at Easter Road over a fortnight ago.

It was a memorable day all round for the club as they recorded their biggest win over Hibernian for 25 years while Larsson became the club's joint third highest goalscorer.

They made a dream start by going ahead after just

Moore was back in the side for the first time since early November when a hamstring problem had brought him to a halt. The veteran Australian defender made a fine penalty box challenge on Smith when the ground had looked impossible to make up.

But Novo proved too quick for Moore soon after and motored past the Soccerroo with ease to go one-on-one with Klos, who once again came off best.

Rangers doubled their lead in the 35th minute when Mikel Arteta was tripped 25 yards from goal.

The resulting free-kick was expertly taken by Ball, his shot taking a slight deflection off the head of Lee Wilkie before beating 'keeper Julian Speroni.

Wilkie is no stranger to calamity in games against Rangers, having conceded an own goal and two penalties the last time the two sides met at Dens Park.

Dundee tried again for the instant response but although Lee Mair's rasping drive beat Klos, it cannoned back off the goalkeeper's left-hand post.

Lovenkrands rattled the same goal frame a couple of minutes after the restart after Arteta had sent him away down the left, with Speroni beaten at his near post.

HEARTS0
MOTHERWELL 0

Hearts could not find a way past a dogged Motherwell in a disappointing game at Tynecastle.

The closest either side came to scoring was a poor second-half strike by Jambos' midfielder Jean-Louis Valois which failed to trouble Well goalkeeper Gordon Marshall nine minutes from time.

Hearts enjoyed the better share of possession during the early exchanges but failed to make it count.

Northern Ireland hitman Kirk latched onto a Patrick Kisnorbo cross after eight minutes but his glancing header landed comfortably in Gordon Marshall's hands.

And just three minutes later Kirk strolled along the 18-yard box unchallenged before unleashing a powerful shot but Marshall dived high to his right to tip the ball behind. From the corner Kevin McKenna nodded the ball just over.

In comparison, Motherwell strikers Alex Burns and David Clarkson were largely subdued in attack and failed to trouble Hearts goalkeeper Craig Gordon.

Ten minutes before the interval Motherwell striker Clarkson tried to break the deadlock from the edge of the box but his shot was deflected wide of Gordon's goal.

The home side were far more direct after the break and put the visiting defence under concerted pressure.

Robert Sloan delivered a well-placed corner and the unmarked Kisnorbo bulletted his header wide of goal in the 63rd minute.

The home side bombarded the Motherwell box with crosses from both wings in a desperate attempt to find a goal.

And defender Martyn Corrigan had to look alert as he headed away a Sloan pull-back just as de Vries was getting ready to pounce.

PATRICK4
DUNFERMLINE1

Battling Partick Thistle kept their slim hopes of survival alive with a thrilling 4-1 win over 10-man Dunfermline at Firhill.

A first half strike by Andy Thomson and a 56th minute penalty by James Grady, after Pars skipper Scott Thomson had been red carded for barging Jamie Mitchell almost on the goalline, gave the Jags a seemingly unassailable two-goal lead.

A quick reply by Pars striker Craig Brewster set up a grandstand last half-hour with chances at both ends going begging.

But two goals in the last minute by Andy Ross and Grady sealed a well deserved victory for the home side.

The opening goal arrived eight minutes from half-time as midfielder Derek Fleming took a short pass from Kenny Milne out on the left and swung in a cross into the box and Andy Thomson, who looked offside, stooped to head past Stillie from only eight yards out.

The second half started with little promise of what was to come but there was great drama in the 56th minute when Thistle doubled their lead.

Milne found Grady with a great ball down the left and when the little striker's cross came over, Scott Thomson bundled Jags midfielder Jamie Mitchell to the ground as he was ready to knock the ball into the empty net.

Pars skipper Thomson was shown the red card by referee Calum Murray and Grady stepped up to send Stillie the wrong way with a fine spotkick.

The home side seemed firmly in control but 10-man Pars gave themselves a lifeline on the hour mark when a Lee Bullen cross was met by Brewster, who's first time shot from 14 yards exploded into the net.

In the final minute however, Andy Ross took the pressure of the home side when he slammed the ball into the net after a three against one Thistle break-away.

Then, in the last seconds, Grady made it 4-1 when he slotted the ball away from around 12 yards out.

LIVINGSTON1
ABERDEEN1

Livingston midfielder Burton O'Brien struck two minutes into stoppage time to deny Aberdeen maximum points after Scott Booth's first-half goal had appeared enough to give Steve Paterson's side victory.

Former Scotland striker Booth struck after 23 minutes to give the Dons a deserved lead.

Livi never got going in the first half, but they moved up a gear in the second period and created plenty of chances to equalise - most of them falling to Fernando Pasquinelli - before O'Brien scored at the death to rescue a point.

There was little impressive about the opening quarter-hour, with both sides embroiled in a tense and error-strewn midfield scrap.

However, the game burst into life in the 21st minute as the Dons upped the pace and almost grabbed the lead.

Livi's normally reliable captain Stuart Lovell surrendered possession to Booth mid-way in his own half, allowing the former international to slip the ball through to former Steve Tosh, who sent a low shot across Roddy McKenzie's body, forcing him to palm it away.

The goalkeeper's clearance only went as far as Leigh Hinds, who fired towards the roof of the net only to be denied by the head of Emmanuel Dorado.

Aberdeen were lifted by the exchange and soon strode into the lead, as Booth controlled Scott Muirhead's cross before curling a shot past the goalkeeper from 16 yards.

They approached the play with more urgency and almost got their reward in the 53rd minute when Lovell got on the end of David McNamee's cross however his shoot trundled just wide.

Aberdeen looked set to take full points before the home side grabbed a dramatic equaliser two minutes into injury time, when O'Brien took advantage of a poor punch from David Preece and swept the ball into the roof

of the net from 16 yards.

KILMARNOCK0
DUNDEE UNITED2

A disputed penalty that was converted in style by Jim McIntyre eight minutes from time confirmed Dundee United's 0-2 victory at Kilmarnock.

The home side, who had been trailing to Billy Dodds' first-half opener, were convinced Steve Fulton had been harshly punished by referee Kevin Toner for a challenge on substitute Jason Scotland.

It was only United's second victory over Killie in the last 22 meetings but a second successive home loss for the Ayrshiremen, who had dominated the second half but failed to find the net.

A sparse crowd witnessed a lethargic start from the home side.

United enjoyed the better of some inconsequential early exchanges until Dodds broke the deadlock in the 20th minute.

The former Rangers man had been operating as an attacking midfielder behind McIntyre and former Killie favourite Andy McLaren and lost his marker once Barry Robson had flighted a free-kick into the box.

Freddie Dindeleux had made an attempt to head it away but, when he could get only the slightest of touches, the ball quickly found its way to Dodds at the far post and he lost no time in rifling a low drive past Francois Dubourdeau.

United were on the back foot for most of the second half as Kilmarnock chased an equaliser however the hosts were caught out as a swift counter-attack saw United wrap up the game with nine minutes remaining, albeit in controversial style.

Up stepped McIntyre and made sure of the points with a cheeky chipped effort that fooled Dubourdeau and ended up just under the crossbar.



Celtic striker Chris Sutton (right) celebrates after bagging two goals in a 6-0 drubbing of Hibernian at Parkhead.

three minutes. Sutton exchanged passes with Hartson before bursting into the box and slotting the ball past Daniel Andersson.

But before being reduced to 10 men, Bobby Williamson's highly-rated youngsters did look dangerous on the break.

Keeper Rab Douglas then brilliantly kept Celtic in front in the 29th minute when Riordan's shot took a wicked deflection but he acrobatically tipped it over the crossbar.

Celtic doubled their advantage a minute before half-time when Hartson headed home Alan Thompson's cross after Daniel Andersson had made a hash of a Petrov cross.

Celtic extended the lead on 53 minutes when the referee pointed to the spot after Larsson had gone down under a clumsy challenge from Colin Murdock and Sutton confidently chipped the ball past the diving Andersson.

Hibernian's misery continued on the hour mark when Larsson teed up Hartson to fire low past the keeper's outstretched right hand and into the bottom corner.

Larsson did get on the scoresheet in the 67th minute when he steered the ball past Andersson from close range after more terrible defending from the visitors.

DUNDEE0
RANGERS2

Rangers showed Dundee no mercy at Dens Park to move back within eight points of Premier League leaders Celtic, who host the first Old Firm derby of 2004 next week.

Rangers cruised to victory, first half goals from Nuno Capucho and Michael Ball proving to be more than enough for the Glasgow giants.

A nervous start on Dunfermline's plastic pitch had conspicuously cost Rangers two weeks ago but this time they were full of early enterprise.

It took the visitors just six minutes to open the scoring, Chris Burke sending in a cross from the right for Capucho to head home unchallenged from six yards.

Dundee rallied swiftly though and captain Barry Smith operated a shoot on sight policy that forced three first half saves out of Stefan Klos in the Rangers goal.

Nacho Novo, a player heavily linked with a move to Ibrox, had been causing the Rangers back line, and Craig Moore in particular, problems with his pace.



Nuno Capucho (centre) heads in the opening goal for Rangers in their 0-2 win at Dundee.

PREMIER LEAGUE

Dundee 0 Rangers 2, Hearts 0 Motherwell 0, Celtic 6 Hibernian 0, Kilmarnock 0 Dundee Utd 2, Livingston 1 Aberdeen 1, Partick 4 Dunfermline 1.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Celtic	18	17	1	0	59	7	52
Rangers	18	14	2	2	43	15	44
Hearts	18	9	3	6	26	22	30
Dunfermline	18	8	5	5	23	25	29
Livingston	18	5	7	6	19	20	22
Motherwell	18	5	6	7	17	21	21
Dundee Utd	18	5	5	8	17	29	20
Kilmarnock	18	6	2	10	23	38	20
Hibernian	18	5	4	9	17	31	19
Dundee	18	4	6	8	20	25	18
Aberdeen	18	4	4	10	20	33	16
Partick	18	2	3	13	17	35	9

DIVISION ONE

Ayr 1 Raith 0, Brechin 1 Clyde 3, Inverness 1 St Johnstone 0, Queens of the South 2 Falkirk 0, St Mirren 1 Ross County 1.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Clyde	19	11	4	4	29	19	37
Inverness CT	18	11	3	4	37	16	36
Queen of South	19	10	3	6	27	24	33
Ross County	19	8	6	5	37	26	30
St Johnstone	19	8	6	5	30	20	30
Falkirk	18	8	5	5	22	19	29
St Mirren	18	5	7	6	16	22	22
Raith	18	4	3	11	19	31	15
Ayr	19	3	6	10	19	35	15
Brechin	19	2	3	14	17	41	9

DIVISION TWO

East Fife 0 Arbroath 1, Forfar 1 Berwick 5, Stenhousemuir 0 Airdrie Utd 1, Hamilton vs Dumbarton - Postponed, Morton vs Alloa - Postponed.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Morton	16	11	4	1	42	21	37
Berwick	17	8	3	6	33	28	27
Airdrie Utd	17	7	5	5	24	25	26
Hamilton	16	7	4	5	34	26	25
Forfar	16	6	6	4	28	25	24
East Fife	17	6	3	8	21	25	21
Arbroath	17	5	5	7	20	28	20
Dumbarton	15	5	4	6	19	20	19
Stenhousemuir	17	4	2	11	16	30	14
Alloa	16	3	4	9	21	30	13

CHIMA THE DESTROYER



Beware of the Nigerian Express Train – Chima Nwaogazi

By Peter Damalas

Nigerian striker Chimaobi Nwaogazi has made the news in the past month with a five-goal haul in as many matches as his club, the Wollongong Wolves, have gone six weeks unbeaten.

After a disastrous start to the campaign, during which many pundits predicted that the Wolves would again be awarded the wooden spoon at the end of the season, Nwaogazi's goals have lifted the club off the tail end of the ladder and closer to the top six.

The club entered its Round 9 encounter with then leaders Parramatta Power with a mere three points from a possible twenty one.

The magnificent 3-1 victory was a turning point in the Wolves' season and the following week's win over defending champions Perth Glory put the Nigerian goal ace Nwaogazi firmly in the national league picture.

The twenty-three-year-old has a knack of scoring vital goals. His four strikes this season have helped the team claim eight out of

twelve points in four weeks.

In a league that is crying out for fresh talent, the Nigerian import has duly obliged this season.

The NSL is traditionally not regarded as an importer of foreign players, and those that have made the journey here, return or move on before their presence is felt.

Sydney Olympic's wingback, Hiroyuki Ishida, is an exception to the rule, and Nwaogazi may follow in his footsteps.

The beginning of his Australian sojourn was rocky, however, as he was warned about the physical nature of Australian soccer, and he was slowly ushered into the first team by his current coach, John Turner.

"When I first came over here I thought the playing style was too physical. I was told that I was soft and that I needed to brave up," Nwaogazi said.

He explained that his trial with Marconi was unsuccessful due to the clash of playing styles between player and team.

His recent success has come at an important stage in his career. After contemplating moves to Sweden and Moldova, he left his homeland of Nigeria in 2000

when he was invited to trial at Sydney Olympic, and he intended to stay in Australia for a six-month period.

Since then he has played out a stint with the Fawkner Blues in Victoria, and has trialled at three Sydney clubs before heading for the south coast.

"Every soccer player in Nigeria wants to play professionally overseas," he said. "Unfortunately it did not work out when I first came over here, but after three years, I have made Australia my home."

Clearly success has come along with his enjoyment of life in Australia.

"The players are great in Wollongong and I have had a wonderful experience," he said.

"Chima" believes that the domestic league in his homeland has changed since his departure. While he said that there had been some improvement in the standard of soccer back home (Nigerian club Enyimba won the 2003 CAF Champions League), he expressed his disappointment with the lack of commitment from the sport's administration.

This has affected the national team, he claims.

"The national team is in decline. There are no new prospects coming through and we rely on the older players."

National selection is one of Nwaogazi's aspirations, and at twenty-three years of age, he may be considered as one of the 'hot prospects' that Nigeria has been waiting for.

"I feel that if I had been playing regularly these past few years, I might have received a call up. I believe that if I continue to play without injury, anything can happen."

His greatest achievement in the game was when he voted Nigeria's Player of the Month in February 2000, after which he rubbed shoulders with the likes of internationals Nwankano Kanu, Taribo West, Celestine Babayaro and Inter Milan's Mohammed Kallon.

Nwaogazi has used this to help maintain a positive outlook for his career.

His ability to adapt his playing style to the surroundings and his tendency to score when it matters most, has for now put him in the spotlight in Australia.

LIVING IT ARRARTE'S WAY

By Luke Doherty

"You make your own luck. The harder you work the better you get," says live wire Wollongong Wolves midfielder Nahuel Arrarte.

This is the new psyche down in Wollongong and Arrarte is just one component of a club that has changed itself from weekly pushovers to one of the danger teams in the NSL.

After leaving Sydney United two years ago as a 21-year-old footballer with a contract and a dream – Arrarte has, along with the Wolves form, transformed himself into one of the most exciting footballers in the league.

"When I was at Sydney United I used to just play soccer, soccer, soccer and more soccer but now I've learnt to adapt," says Arrarte.

But more than just the colour of his jersey has changed since then.

The contract is still there but now he leads a much more hectic life.

Arrarte is one of just a few players who work during the day before jumping into the nearest phone booth and changing into a soccer superstar.

He is a sales representative for a company that sells soccer boots and team wear.

Arrarte works five days a week and leads a more hectic lifestyle than is afforded to a professional footballer.

Arrarte hits the road at 7am, for soccer company Jomaa and after following the white road markings for hours you'd think his day would be over.

But then that 'second career' kicks in. The one the Arrarte has followed with an obvious passion and hunger.



Nahuel Arrarte has been one of the Wolves standout players this season.

Before he returns home to a hot meal and the company of his wife there is still the little matter of training and with the revolution that is occurring at the south coast club you can be assured that the sessions are anything but light.

"There aren't a lot of players in the NSL who can just play for a living. Most of them have to work," he says.

"It can get pretty hectic working 12-

14 hour days. 7:30am to 9:30pm."

"I have a lenient boss he is very flexible. It's not easy but it can be done."

"I think that you shouldn't put all your eggs into one basket. There is only a selected few who can say that they have a definite contract."

"At the end of the day I don't want to be 30 and not have anything to do. All players should have something to fall

back on."

The revolution started with a shock win against a then league leading Parramatta Power, Arrarte himself kicking things off with a goal in the 29th minute.

Since that 3-1 result everything has changed for the Wolves. They are undefeated in the four rounds since that match and Arrarte says that there is a

newfound sense of confidence amongst the squad.

"You beat Parramatta (Power) 3-1 and you get a boost of confidence."

"I think that the ball started bouncing our way a bit."

"You make your own luck. The harder you work the better you get."

"Balls that weren't going in started to go in."

"It shows you the nature of the league at the moment – any team can win or lose."

"If you had of told me that Perth would have lost this many then I would have told you that you were joking."

The Wolves are the type of team who possess an enormous amount of potential for the new league to be introduced next year.

No current NSL club has the capability to turnover the required \$5.5million but the Wolves do have a lot of the other qualifications.

Wollongong is a one team town and WIN stadium fits the 'boutique' criteria that the NSL taskforce is asking for and Arrarte says that it would be a shame if the Wolves were to disappear into the dark reaches of the NSW state league.

"The great thing about Wollongong is that it's a one team town."

"You have the local media as well which means there are TV cameras at training and there is always something on the Wolves in the paper."

But while the weekends are filled with screaming football fans you can be sure that come Monday morning he will jump back into the phone booth and transform from the professional footballer back to the mild mannered sales representative.

Don't be Kewell to a country that's true



Question marks have been raised as to whether Harry Kewell will make the Venezuela match with the Roos?

By Mark van Aken

Harry Kewell is Australia's best soccer player. Not just now, but probably in history. In a country that has produced many fine soccer players he sits up above all as one of exquisite quality and precision, a player who would not be out of place at any of the planet's top clubs.

His form in an injury interrupted season at Liverpool has been one of the club's bright points in an otherwise gloomy season.

Since debuting for his country against Chile as a fresh faced 17 year old, Kewell has managed only 15 'Senior A' appearances in the green and gold. 26 next September, Kewell has come under constant fire from the Australian soccer media and community for his commitment, or lack thereof to the national program. Any criticism must be tempered by the fact that, as is well documented, Australia employs one of the most ad hoc and infrequent national programs of any nation

in the FIFA family. After a seemingly never ending string of misses for the Socceroos, the Western Sydney native began what appeared to be a new attitude of commitment to the Australian cause after defying former club Leeds United and playing against England in the uber high profile friendly in February. It seemed to mark a new era where the star player was willing to stand up to his club, something that under previous manager David O'Leary he appeared unwilling to do.

Since his somewhat controversial transfer from Elland Road to Anfield, several Leeds officials have expressed their discontent at Kewell's management in their handling of the whole affair. There was also talk that Kewell's camp had held extensive talks with Liverpool in February, further drawing the ire of officials of the Yorkshire club. Perhaps the reason for Kewell's defiance re playing against England was a direct result of him already knowing that his tenure at Leeds was drawing to a close and that he would suiting up with their Premiership rivals come the new season. Add to this the chance to perform under the spot light of, albeit for one half, a full strength English international and the reprieve Kewell was awarded amongst the long time doubters back home seems at least slightly tarnished.

Be it unhappy coincidence or otherwise, when Australia next played at Landsdowne Road, Dublin in August, a short ferry across the Irish sea from his new club, Kewell was once again playing truant from the Socceroos. While seemingly legitimately injured, the attacking mid fielder was no sooner in camp with Farina and the team than he was hopping it back to Liverpool, not even staying for the game. This in stark contrast to several Australian players, led by his former Leeds strike partner Mark Viduka, years back paying their own way to Glasgow to attend a Socceroos friendly against Scotland.

Harry's talent seems to be the allure that forces us to turn a blind eye to his misgivings. It's like a guy dating a super model and her treating him like dirt, because inevitably she knows she has something that

he can't resist. Australia is ranked 82nd in the world, mostly due to lack of matches. In most people's summation, on talent alone, our national team realistically should sit anywhere between the high teens through to forty or so. Not a year goes by where the team is not hailed as the most complete and talented ever- and going on the numbers of Australians performing admirably in some of Europe's top leagues, these appraisals appear largely accurate. For the mean time the icing on the Socceroos cake is the man known simply as H.

The Socceroos ultimate date with destiny may be some 23 months off, however perhaps one of the most important bumps in the road to Germany will come early in the New Year. The ASA has secured a valuable friendly against fifth ranked South American team Venezuela. Valuable in sponsorship appeal for the ASA? No. Valuable in lucrative television rights in Australia? Not likely. Valuable in gaining much needed mass-market appeal across the country? We don't think so. Priceless preparation for the cauldron that will await the Socceroos in November '05? You bet.

It was in this column two weeks ago that Frank Farina was quoted as saying "its vital that we go into those 2 games well prepared" adding "games against South American teams are vital".

He did however lament that even if he did get his wish list of games against South American teams or sides "who play in a similar style", "It's hard to duplicate (the atmosphere of actual qualifiers) in friendly games".

Hard to duplicate, but not impossible. A visit to the 'Lonely Planet' travel guide lists the following information:

Venezuela's government is in a state of flux after a coup and its sudden reversal. President Hugo Chavez was returned to power two days after he was arrested and imprisoned by his own military high command. Interim President Pedro Carmona was swiftly sworn in and began to take drastic and unpopular steps such as dissolving the National Assembly. But thousands of people flooded the streets to demonstrate against the

illegal coup and took over state television to demand Chavez' reinstatement.

Assuming the safety of the players is a non-issue, which unfortunately according to the preceding it may not be, Venezuela's capital of Caracas seems like the very best place to replicate the melting pot of uncertainty and hysteria that surrounds a qualifier in South America. Zelko Kalac, a man whose commitment to the national cause has never wavered despite countless years firmly planted on the Socceroo bench behind Bosnich and more recently Schwarzer, has come out with his hand up for the trip. This despite his Serie A club Perugia desperately keen for him to stay as they fight off relegation to the troubled Serie B.

Word is Kewell isn't so keen. It will interrupt his schedule with Liverpool; a team already eliminated from the Championship race and other competitions like the League Cup. Key Socceroos players like Kewell must surely understand the significance of such a golden opportunity to rehearse in the atmosphere that the game will afford. Its not like friendlies against CONMEBOL teams that play 18 World Cup Qualifiers are a dime a dozen.

Frank Farina was towing a tough line on players when automatic Oceania qualification was on the table. Now that it's gone any threats of not fronting for friendlies translating into no Germany are somewhat hollow.

At some stage however a line will need to be drawn. Barring injury, full squads for games against England, Ireland and Jamaica this year, all played in the UK and Ireland and then talk of a second string line up for a game that might require some elbow grease is not nearly acceptable and Farina shouldn't stand for it. Farina is talking tough with his Olyroos squad, declaring that those miss the approaching Oceania qualifiers will miss the plane to Athens.

This may mean playing without key players, including rising star Patrick Kisnorbo and perhaps others. Its time to tow the same line with the senior line up. Let's hope Harry and his seductive skills are willing to come along for the ride.

WIN

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WORLD

WORLD TABLES

French Ligue I

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1 Monaco	18	13	3	2	32	14	42
2 Lyon	18	10	5	3	32	14	35
3 PSG	19	10	5	4	25	16	35
4 Sochaux	18	10	4	4	29	18	34
5 Auxerre	19	10	2	7	30	18	32
6 Marseille	17	10	0	7	24	17	30
7 Nice	18	7	8	3	18	15	29
8 Lens	19	9	1	9	16	28	28
9 Nantes	19	8	3	8	19	18	27
10 Strasbourg	19	7	5	7	30	27	26
11 Bordeaux	18	7	5	6	18	16	26
12 Rennes	19	5	8	6	20	19	23
13 Bastia	19	6	5	8	23	30	23
14 Lille	19	5	7	7	21	24	22
15 Montpellier	17	6	3	8	25	28	21
16 Ajaccio	19	5	4	10	17	26	19
17 Metz	18	4	4	10	14	21	16
18 Mans	19	3	7	9	17	30	16
19 Guingamp	19	4	3	12	16	30	15
20 Toulouse	19	2	6	11	13	30	12

(French Ligue I will commence on the 10th of January)

German Bundesliga

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1 Bremen	17	12	3	2	45	20	39
2 Bayern	17	10	5	2	40	19	35
3 Leverkusen	17	10	5	2	34	17	35
4 Stuttgart	17	10	5	2	24	7	35
5 Bochum	17	7	5	5	30	22	26
6 Dortmund	17	7	4	6	29	25	25
7 Wolfsburg	17	8	1	8	35	32	25
8 Schalke	17	6	6	5	23	23	24
9 Hamburg	17	6	5	6	23	29	23
10 Freiburg	17	6	3	8	24	37	21
11 Hannover	17	5	5	7	30	37	20
12 Hansa	17	5	4	8	24	27	19
13 Moenchengladbach	17	5	4	8	18	24	19
14 1860 Munich	17	5	4	8	18	26	19
15 Kaiserslautern	17	5	3	9	20	31	15
16 Koln	17	3	4	10	15	26	13
17 Hertha Berlin	17	2	7	8	15	33	13
18 Eintracht	17	3	3	11	16	28	12

(German Bundesliga will commence on the 31st of January)

Spanish Primera Liga

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1 Real Madrid	17	12	3	2	36	18	39
2 Valencia	17	11	4	2	31	12	37
3 Deportivo	17	10	3	4	26	14	33
4 Osasuna	17	7	6	4	18	13	27
5 Villarreal	17	7	6	4	20	17	27
6 Atlético	17	8	3	6	23	22	27
7 Málaga	17	8	2	7	23	20	26
8 Athletic	17	7	4	6	22	20	25
9 Barcelona	17	6	6	5	23	22	24
10 Valladolid	17	6	6	5	22	23	24
11 Mallorca	17	7	2	8	21	28	23
12 Sevilla	17	5	6	6	24	21	21
13 Racing	17	6	4	7	20	25	21
14 Albacete	17	6	2	9	21	22	20
15 Zaragoza	17	5	4	8	18	21	19
16 Betis	17	4	6	7	21	22	18
17 Celta	17	3	8	6	22	25	17
18 Real Sociedad	17	3	6	8	16	28	15
19 Murcia	17	1	9	7	15	28	12
20 Espanyol	17	2	2	13	12	33	8

(Spanish Primera-Liga will commence on the 4th of January)

Italian Serie A

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1 Roma	14	11	3	0	31	4	36
2 Juventus	14	9	3	2	31	15	30
3 Milan	13	9	3	1	22	6	30
4 Inter Milan	14	8	4	2	25	9	28
5 Lazio	14	9	1	4	23	17	28
6 Parma	14	7	3	4	22	18	24
7 Udinese	14	7	3	4	19	16	24
8 Sampdoria	14	5	6	3	17	15	21
9 Chievo	14	5	3	6	14	18	18
10 Modena	14	4	4	6	12	15	16
11 Siena	13	3	6	4	16	12	15
12 Reggina	14	2	8	4	12	21	14
13 Brescia	14	2	7	5	21	26	13
14 Bologna	14	2	5	7	12	21	11
15 Perugia	14	0	9	5	19	29	9
16 Lecce	14	2	3	9	14	28	9
17 Empoli	14	1	3	10	7	28	6
18 Ancona	14	0	4	10	7	26	4

(Serie A will commence on the 4th of January)

English Premier League

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Arsenal	12	9	3	0	25	10	30
Chelsea	12	9	2	1	26	9	29
Man Utd	12	9	1	2	23	7	28
Charlton	12	6	3	3	19	15	21
Birmingham	12	5	5	2	11	8	20
Man City	12	5	3	4	22	15	18
Fulham	12	5	3	4	22	18	18
Liverpool	12	5	2	5	18	14	17
Southampton	12	4	5	3	10	7	17
Newcastle	12	4	4	4	16	18	16
Portsmouth	12	4	3	5	17	16	15
Middlesbrough	12	4	2	6	11	15	14
Tottenham	12	3	3	6	11	16	12
Bolton	12	2	6	4	9	19	12
Leicester	12	3	2	7	19	21	11
Aston Villa	12	2	5	5	9	15	11
Everton	11	2	4	5	12	15	10
Wolverhampton	12	2	4	6	8	24	10
Blackburn	11	2	2	7	15	21	8
Leeds	12	2	2	8	11	31	8

Greek Ethniki Katigoria

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1 Olympiacos	15	12	2	1	34	9	38
2 Panathinaikos	15	10	4	1	30	11	34
3 PAOK	15	10	2	3	25	13	32
4 Egaleo	15	9	3	3	19	10	30
5 AEK	15	8	4	3	32	15	28
6 Iraklis	15	6	4	5	20	17	22
7 Panionios	15	5	6	4	23	18	21
8 Halkidona	15	5	5	5	20	20	20
9 OFI	15	5	3	7	15	26	18
10 Xanthi	15	4	4	7	15	22	16
11 Ionikos	15	4	3	8	19	25	15
12 Paniliakos	15	3	5	7	23	29	14
13 Aris	15	3	3	9	13	25	12
14 Kallithea	15	1	8	6	20	24	11
15 Proodeftiki	15	1	6	8	9	25	9
16 Akrotiris	15	1	4	10	14	42	7

(Greek Ethniki Katigoria will commence on the 4th of January)

Italian Serie B

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Atalanta	20	10	10	0	26	11	40
Palermo	20	10	9	1	27	12	39
Ternana	20	10	5	5	31	22	35
Piacenza	20	9	6	5	21	16	33
Messina	20	8	8	4	27	20	32
Livorno	20	7	11	2	23	16	32
Cagliari	20	8	7	5	33	21	31
Torino	20	8	6	6	29	21	30
Catania	20	8	6	6	27	22	30
Ascoli	20	7	7	6	25	23	28
Salernitana	20	7	6	7	15	16	27
Treviso	20	6	8	6	22	22	26
Pescara	20	6	8	6	17	21	26
Fiorentina	20	5	9	6	20	25	24
Venezia	20	4	11	5	19	21	23
Triestina	20	5	8	7	28	31	23
Napoli	20	3	13	4	14	20	22
Albinoleffe	20	5	7	8	19	26	22
Vicenza	20	3	11	6	15	19	20
Genoa	20	4	8	8	18	29	20
Verona	20	3	9	8	23	29	18
Bari	20	4	6	10	22	30	18
Como	20	3	6	11	14	28	15
Avellino	20	1	7	12	17	31	10

(Serie B will commence on the 4th of January)

Dutch Eredivisie

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1 Ajax	15	12	1	2	39	16	37
2 PSV	16	11	4	1	44	13	37
3 Alkmaar	16	10	2	4	34	17	32
4 Feyenoord	16	8	4	4	30	21	28
5 Willem II	16	8	3	5	26	24	27
6 Heerenveen	16	8	2	6	20	19	26
7 Twente	16	8	1	7	31	28	25
8 Utrecht	16	7	4	5	21	18	25
9 Roda	15	5	6	4	26	19	21
10 Roosendaal	16	5	6	5	16	18	21
11 Groningen	16	5	5	6	22	25	20
12 NEC	16	6	1	9	19	27	19
13 NAC	16	5	3	8	25	25	18
14 Waalwijk	16	4	5	7	19	22	17
15 Volendam	16	3	4	9	17	44	13
16 Vitesse	16	2	7	7	23	30	13
17 Den Haag	16	2	4	10	12	35	10
18 Zwolle	16	1	4	11	9	32	7

(Dutch Eredivisie will commence on the 25th of January)

Belgian Eesteklasse

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
1 Anderlecht	17	15	1	1	45	14	46
2 Standard	17	12	2	3	34	13	38
3 Genk	17	9	4	4	35	21	31
4 Mouscron	17	8	6	3	32	19	30
5 Club Brugge	17	8	4	5	32	22	28
6 Sint-Truiden	17	7	6	4	21	21	27
7 Beveren	17	8	0	9	24	27	24
8 Westerlo	17	6	6	5	19	23	24
9 Germinal Beerschot	17	6	5	6	16	18	23
10 AA Gent	17	5	8	4	19	15	23
11 La Louvière	17	4	8	5	21	22	20
12 Cercle Brugge	17	4	8	5	13	21	20
13 Lierse	17	4	7	6	17	20	19
14 Lokeren	17	3	4	10	18	30	13
15 Heusden	17	3	4	10	14	28	13
16 Mons	17	2	7	8	14	27	13
17 Antwerp	17	3	3	11	12	35	12
18 Charleroi	17	2	5	10	9	19	11

(Belgian Jupiler League will commence on the 17th of January)

from the dressing sheds

by Mark Stavroulakis



Ned Zelic - Melbourne Utd's Prime Target

Melbourne's new kid on the block for next season's reformed league Melbourne United have already staged a new star for their hopeful appointment next year.

Former Socceroo star Ned Zelic has been the main target set.

Currently playing his football for J-League side the Urawa Red Diamonds, Zelic is known to be close friends with Melbourne United's front-man an ex-Socceroo Steve Horvat.

The new consortium expects to unveil its plans for the new season in February once the league has been put through by the ASA.

This will be a huge signing for the Melbourne club as Zelic is known to many as one of Australia's most talented players ever to leave our shores.

Zelic is currently in Canberra with his family and brother Ivan for the Christmas break.



Ned Zelic has been courted by hopeful new Australian soccer club Melbourne United.

Don't count out a possible move for brother Ivan either.

It would be a sight to see both Zelic brother's don the Melbourne United jersey next season?

The one good aspect to come from this is the fact that ex-stars are wanting to come home now with this new league due for a next season start - let's hope that more ex-Roo stars jump on the bandwagon.

John Aloisi has stated that he would love to play for Adelaide United when finishes up in Spain while Stan Lazaridis and Josip Skoko have also stated their desire to return to their old hunting grounds.

South Leading The Way

One club that has certainly done its homework in working towards securing a better future in Australia's soccer league has been South Melbourne. Last week

SPIRIT'S NEW FLAME?

After two-weeks of turmoil Spirit chairman Antonio Gelonesi has stated that he will help the club's cause and will find new backers for the new year.

That was the verdict summed up by Gelonesi who spent \$40,000 two weeks ago in making the Spirit v Newcastle match go ahead after the club went into liquidation.

FREE AGENTS FOR ALL

All National League players could become free agents at the end of the season meaning that they could sign for the club of their choice or go abroad without any transfer fees splurged towards their old clubs.

This was the message sent out after the Melbourne Knights confirmed that they will NOT be apart of the new league next season

All Knights contracts look certain to be given a free pass meaning that the rest of the league will join the same scenario.

It will be interesting to see who goes where next season with a number of players set to miss out due to the proposed 10-team competition.



Ljubo Milicevic believes money won't keep players in Oz.

It looks as though at least 100 players will miss the cut next season - a number of jobs will be up in the air for the players that fail to make the cut!

Put Up Your Dukes

Mark Viduka's recent good run of form in the English Premier League with strugglers Leeds United has prompted a 'come and get me plea' by the big striker.

The V-Bomber has been watched by Premier League giants Manchester United, AS Roma and Inter Milan.

It will only be time until the big Australian does make the move from Leeds United who could be contemplating on playing in the First Division next season.

Imagine this strike force pairing of Ruud van Nisterooy and the Duke - WOW!

Milicevic: Money won't keep players in Oz

Olyroos captain Ljubo Milicevic says money alone won't keep Australia's best players in the country.

Back in Melbourne during the Swiss winter break, the FC Thun defender told the *Herald-Sun*, "Money is important but the main reason I'm in Europe isn't monetary. The end goal is to play in one of the top leagues in Europe.

"For me to do that I have to be playing against the best, and the best is in Europe.

"The important factor is not to go when you're too young. You need a good grounding of playing in our national league.

"Playing regularly here for a couple of years makes you better prepared and equipped to take on the challenge.

"Going to a foreign country on your own is not easy."

KINGZ ON A HIGH

New Football Kingz majority shareholder Brian Katzen already has new backers lined up for the Kiwi club and also transfer targets ahead of next season's revamp.

Katzen is leading the shake-up of the new-look Kingz, which has been endorsed by New Zealand Soccer and also has the backing of football identities Dave Wilson and Sam Malcolmson.

"Getting that support was the key," Katzen told the NZ Herald from London.

"The key step was showing some stability in the financial structure which in turn would lead to an improved playing performance on the field."

Katzen is a director with Swansea City and also revealed: "I've also drawn up a short-list of prospective coaches. That, and having four or five good players on which to build on, is a priority.

"It is a long-term commitment. If we are in, we are there to see things through.

"We need to build on the brand and, most importantly, go from the bottom to the top in a realistic time frame."

Current chairman and majority shareholder Chris

Turner will stand aside at the end of the season.

Kingz chief Peter Cox confirmed: "He will step down as board chairman and be insignificant for the rest of the season. He could be on the new board, but in a very minority role.

"There are a number of priorities," Cox said. "We have to find someone to front the board and lead the charge.

We also have to look for a chief executive officer."

GEELONG TO BENEFIT?

Geelong will benefit if a new Melbourne club gets off the ground this year.

With close ties to the Melbourne Knights, the new club's backers believe Geelong can play a major part in its success.

Knights chief Steve Horvat is also working with the consortium and told the Geelong Advertiser, "There's a great market down here that is very enthusiastic about the game and there's no reason why there couldn't be an APL game or two in the region.

"Geelong has such a strong soccer tradition that it would be a shame if they were not to play a role in a strong, mainstream and national competition.

"Capturing that huge soccer growth that's emerging in this area is one of the first tasks and they'll get together with the clubs in this region and present their vision and offer them an opportunity to come on

VIC PREMIER LEAGUE ALL SET

The 2004 Premier League fixture has been released, with 2003 premiers Green Gully opening the season on Friday 6th of February.

There are a number of intriguing encounters to kick off this years competition with 2003 runners up Frankston Pines meeting their promoted south eastern rivals Knox City.

Round 1 will conclude on the ninth of February when Bulleen Zebras take on Whittlesea Stallions at the Veneto Club.

With a number of big signings, the 2004 Premier League season looks set to be the toughest yet. Who will take out the title in 2004?

For the 2004 VPL fixture, visit the VSF website on www.soccervictoria.org.au

GOUTZI AND HALPS RIFT?

Many observers at last week's Olympic v Spirit match would have witnessed a cheek and tounge show-down between George Goutzioulis and Troy Halpin. The pair had exchanged some heated words before half-time and to the crowd's surprise at the start of the second half, Halpin was replaced.

THE CULINA'S

One keen spectator that was present at last week's Olympic v Spirit match was former Blues' coach Branko Culina.

The Soccer NSW Technical Director was there watching the game with his two sons Jason and Dean. Jason is currently on holidays from his current Dutch club Ajax.

To Olympic's credit when they saw the Culina clan walk through OKI Jubilee Oval a chant started with the words "BRANKO - BRANKO", Sexy soccer is obviously missed at Jubilee...

HOLLYWOOD'S BACK

It was good to see Socceroo star Brett Holman back on our shores after his successful year at Dutch Second Division club Excelsior.

Currently on-loan from Feyenoord, talk has it that the star striker could well don the Feyenoord shirt in the not too distant future - stay tuned for more info on "Hollywood".

photooftheweek



Chelsea players shown kicking up a night on wet and windy Champions League against Besiktas.

Pick out the many stars that are on show on their bench.

Not bad, Big Bad Roman has also gone for

players such as Rivaldo, Nedved, Nisterooy, Davids, Ronaldo, Henry and a few more to add to his collection of already superstars at Stamford Bridge.

I wonder how much a ticket costs to watch the Blues in action?

Soccer NSW

Milestones 2003

As Nick Hornby points out in 'Fever Pitch', one of classic sports books of the last twenty years, football fans don't think in terms of years. They talk about seasons, with the silent slash between 83/84 the only concession to the normal calendar year.

Nevertheless, 2004 is almost upon us and that presents a good time to reflect on a year of change in NSW soccer. A lot has happened in the last twelve months.

In January, Soccer NSW took the giant step of bringing together the state's soccer organisations into one body that presents a united face to the community, funding bodies and the government.

The first annual Under-17 Sydney Tournament kicked off, and it contained a good mix of teams, including Westfield Sports High, Parramatta City and Macleay Valley Rangers from the north coast. The NSW Institute of Sport won an exciting Cup Final 4-3 over Hajduk Wanderers.



The wily Les De Celis coached A.P.I.A. to victory

The NSW Youth League's many youngsters began another long season with matches around the metropolitan and country areas.

Meanwhile, the 2002/03 NSW Premier League was bubbling along nicely, with A.P.I.A. Leichhardt Tigers establishing an early lead, closely fol-

lowed by Parramatta Eagles and surprise packets Central Coast.

February saw the Coerver coaching staff select six squads of skillful junior players to tour Europe and Asia. Sir Geoff Hurst, hero of the World Cup Final in 1966, flew in to study the NSW Institute of Sport development system at Valentine Park and promote community football programmes.

NSW Premier Bob Carr announced the establishment of the Johnny Warren Soccer Academy at Homebush Bay, part of the state government's task force plan to encourage local growth in soccer.

And the NSW Winter Super League commenced another season.

In March, six current and former NSW Sapphires players were picked in the Matildas squad that was preparing for the 2003 Women's World Cup.

Long-serving Soccer NSW Competition Secretary Graham Crawhall retired after eight years' service.

The Australian Deaf Soccer Titles were successfully staged at Jensen Park, Bankstown.

In May, the NSW Premier League Finals Series commenced. Five clubs were participating: Blacktown City Demons, A.P.I.A. Leichhardt Tigers, Bonnyrigg White Eagles, Belconnen Blue Devils and Parramatta Eagles.

In the end, it was Blacktown and Leichhardt, the top two teams, who fought their way into the Grand Final.

The Tigers took the title after a memorable clash at Lambert Park, which was packed to the rafters with Premier League supporters on a great evening for NSW soccer.

Fairfield Bulls were relegated.

In other May news, Jean-Paul De Marigny resigned as state coaching and development manager, to be replaced by Branko Culina. Soccer NSW held successful state gala days at Valentine Park.

June saw Central Coast striker James Monie collect the Premier League Gold Medal as player of the year. Monie was also the league's top scorer.

Focus then shifted to the NSW Winter Super League, in which Sydney Crescent Star were establishing a formidable lead at the top of the league, spearheaded by lively striker Tanju Balabanel.

The 2003 Friendship games were also hosted at VSP, with elite under-14 players from around the country mixing fun with top line sporting competition.

July saw trials for the NSW state titles were also held in the various nominated soccer zones. Still on youth development, seven NSW players were selected in the national under-17 Joeys squad to travel to the World Cup in Finland.

The Qantas National Talent Identification Championships for Women were held at VSP, with the local girls recording strong results, as expected, in both the 15's and 16's age groups.

The Winter Super League continued to move towards the climactic stages, with Sydney Crescent Star and Fraser Park Dragons fighting tooth and nail to claim the championship.

August featured the finals of the State, Robertson and Amateur Cups, held in style at Pacifilo Park, Liverpool.

Lead by captain Kylie Ledbrook, the NSW Academy side won the Women's Super League Grand Final with a crushing win over Northern NSW Academy.

Sydney University won the Women's State League title ahead of St. George.

NSW Super League player of the year was Michelle Carney of Macarthur Rams. And in an otherwise unheralded state league match, Hills United and Belmore Hercules drew with the astonishing score line of 6-6.

September saw a study released which proved that soccer is far and away the state's most popular sport, with many more players than it's competitors.

It followed the news that Soccer NSW had posted record numbers of new player registrations.

The Winter Super League Grand Final was taken by Crescent Star, with a battling 3-2 win over Fraser Park. The Lidcombe-based club were promoted to the NSW Premier League.

In the NSW First Division, underdogs Mount Pritchard defeated minor premiers Northern Tigers 2-0 in the Grand Final.

Former chief of Soccer NSW Peter Gray was inducted into the Hall of Fame for his service to soccer in the state.

In the last big act of a busy soccer month, the boys Qantas National Talent

Identification Championships commenced at VSP. Queensland did well to win both categories, though there were some extraordinary performances from many players and teams.

In October, the NSW Council of Associations annual dinner and awards night proceeded at the Carlton Hotel in Parramatta, and Bill Cullinan received the prestigious George Chuehward medal.

Winners at the Silver Medal awards dinner included Rob Portelli (Ryde City) and Peter Munsie (Macarthur Rams), who shared the Silver Medal for player of the season.

The new NSW Institute of Sport squad was announced by coach Kelly Cross, and the new batch of 14 and 15 year olds began their challenging training sessions, aiming to represent Australia at junior level in a couple of years' time.

The Continental Tyres Cup was announced — a new competition which gives top teams from the local associations a chance to have a crack at NSW's best Premier League clubs in an FA-Cup style knockout format.

The Champion of Champions Grand Finals attracted 5,000 supporters and participants to Valentine Park for the 15 matches.

The Women's National Soccer League kicked off, with the NSW Sapphires posting some early victories.

In November, the Johnny Warren Cup provided excellent pre-season games for some of the NSW Premier League clubs. The cup was eventually presented by Mr Warren himself to Bonnyrigg White Eagles skipper Tayfun Devrimol.

The NSW Premier League started up



A.P.I.A. Leichhardt Tigers striker Zlatko Arambasic scored three goals in the 2003 NSW Premier League grand final

again late in the month, with much of the early running made by Belconnen, Bankstown City and St George, with Sydney Crescent Star also causing a stir by upsetting A.P.I.A. Leichhardt in Round One.

In December, the action and upsets of the NSW Premier League continued, while a series of mergers and senior-youth alliances in the lower leagues were confirmed, as clubs worked to meet strict new Soccer NSW guidelines for inclusion in elite competitions.

The NSW Sapphires, undefeated for the duration of the Women's National Soccer League season, capped a brilliant year by defeating defending champions Queensland Sting 3-1 in the WNSL Grand Final.

The NSW team featured 8 players aged 18 years old or younger.

And Soccer NSW President Tom A. Doumanis announced strong profits for the new, unified soccer organization — a sign that unity seems paying off for NSW soccer.

On that note, Soccer NSW would like to wish all its readers a happy and safe New Year.

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FROM THE SIDELINES

WITH GREG STOCK



Sentas tipped

The coaching hot seat at Rockdale shows no sign of being filled as yet, with the committee adamant a decision will not be made until the new year. Some of the names being bandied around include former Socceroo Doug Utjesenovic, ex-Marconi boss Lee Sterrey and ex-Sydney Olympic coach John Sentas.

After a season out of the coaching caper, Sentas would be an inspired decision given his ties with a number of the playing squad and an uncanny ability to turn around poorly performing sides. We wait for an official decision with interest.

NSW Wanderers

Former Blacktown City striker Jon Angelucci has reportedly signed for Singapore Armed Forces F.C. for season 2004. Mirko Jurilj has also reportedly signed for Malaysian club Johor and jets out for pre-season training on the 8th of January.

Ex St. George midfielder Ali Salim has returned from a stint in Lebanon and may resume his career with a Premier League club in the not too distant future.

Saints head south

St. George have all but confirmed that their home game with Belconnen on Saturday February 21st will be played in the seaside resort town of Batemans Bay. Club President Ross Gardiner is finalising the arrangements with the Eurobodalla Shire Council and the local soccer association who have agreed to heavily promote the game.

The Saints are also keen to run a few soccer clinics in the leadup to the game utilising former Socceroos Raphael Bove and Gabriel Mendez to spearhead the campaign.

Savoca back in January

Still on the Saints, midfielder Vince Savoca has just undergone surgery on his broken right ankle and is set to spend the next 8 weeks on the sidelines.

Savoca had an arthroscopy to remove some chipped bone fragments and to have some cartilage shaved off the ankle, with the prognosis being he should be ready to resume training at the end of January.

Dincer on the rise

A surprise guest at Saints training last Saturday was none other than former striker Orhan Dincer,

who is currently on the books of Turkish First Division club Malatyastor. In Sydney for a two-week holiday during the mid season break, Dincer was home to celebrate Christmas with his family, keen to continue his meteoric rise into European football.

"It has been like a dream come true and I am really enjoying my time there," said Dincer. "Playing full-time football with a First Division club in Europe has always been my dream and top to be living it day-to-day, I really have to pinch myself."

Despite the obvious cultural barriers Dincer has made an immediate impression, forcing his way into the first team squad of eighteen and playing one game in the first half of the season.

"When I first arrived I was put into the first team squad and have been there most of the season so far," continued Dincer. "It isn't easy to hold your place and with the team is running sixth so the competition for spots is hot. We have a number of internationals in the team, players from Macedonia, Yugoslavia, Africa and a couple of Turkish National Team players so our squad is a good one. We also had a coaching change but I have tried to keep my head down and train hard and see what happens from there."

Born and raised in Australia Dincer would be a left field candidate for Frank Farina's Under-23 squad but given his continued development he could well be a name to remember for the future.

"I am still only 21-years old and my previous coach has kept telling me to be patient and the rewards will come. I feel my game is improving all the time but my first aim is to get a regular starting spot and take it from there. If I were to be given an opportunity at international level I would take it with both hands, but at this stage it's all about training hard and playing good football, the rest will look after itself."

Dolphins refresh squad

Many of the Winter Super League teams have already been engaged in pre-season training in preparation for what shapes up as one of the most competitive leagues on record. Up on the peninsula, Manly coach Phil Moss has all but settled his squad announcing a few new signings to his team that finished last season mid-table.

Roland Webber has rejoined the club after spending the last year travelling in Europe, while Sean Walsh, an ex Australian Under-17 international has

signed from Northern Spirit. The most notable signing of all is Silver Medal winner Rob Portelli who is reportedly 'training the house down.' Goalkeeper Dean McCreath is also back in training after undergoing a second knee reconstruction last year.

Cromer nearing completion

Speaking of things Manly, the grandstand at Cromer Park is expected to be ready for the first game of season 2004. The finishing touches to the roofing take are scheduled to take place in the second week of January offering Dolphins fans one of the best facilities in the league. The dressing rooms are also in the process of being revamped at the northern end of the ground.

New Sharks

Sutherland coach Vic Ellul has announced a couple of worthy editions to his team with defender Bradley Campbell and striker Luke Tomich agreeing to terms.

Farewell Alex

Over at MSC Liverpool coach Paul Carter has started his pre-season with the news that veteran striker Alex Araujo has finally announced his retirement. "Alex has been a sterling player for many years but like all things he feels he wants to concentrate on work and family and so he has made a very difficult decision," said Carter.

"He has told me that if he changes his mind he

would only play for MSC Liverpool, but at this stage his decision seems final." Eric Williams will return in 2004, though Anthony Driene has been released and Daniel Willoughby has moved onto Crescent Star.

"We have a few holes to fill," continued Carter, "but at this stage there is no need to panic. We have the majority of last year's team back again and with a few of the youth team stepping up there is enough depth to be competitive."

Ryde playing for Hart

Ryde City Gunners have announced their new coach with former lower grade boss Jim Hart getting the nod.

"A lot of people will probably say Jim who?" said club spokesman Greg Young. "But we felt that Jim knows how this club works and we felt he represented the best candidate to continue our emphasis on the development of our youth."

Bulls will be back

Fairfield Bulls have also made a few signings including three former AC United players - goalkeeper Claudio Fernandez, midfielders Robert Sacco and Javier Mancino.

Defender Paul Jurcevic is also close to agreeing to terms along with Lisandro Berbis, brother of Eagles player Luciano. Ex-AC United forward Johnny Ghiso is also rumored to be considering an offer to join the Bulls.



Soccer match or pub brawl? A.P.I.A. Leichhardt Tigers take on Canterbury-Marrickville Olympic in a tough NSW Premier League encounter



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Penrith Panthers



Paul Goodwin

The Panthers began last season in reasonable form but so far in 2003-4 things have not worked out at all well.

The opening day derby against Blacktown went horribly wrong for Penrith.

They played well, by all accounts, but had no luck in front of goal and Blacktown wound up solid winners.

After that first loss they fared no better a week later against Bankstown, a game again held at their new St Marys ground of Cook Park, one which has not provided a very good recipe for success thus far.

Penrith travelled next to Canberra to meet Belconnen and were hammered. They never looked like winning and it seemed morale was at an all time low.

The new faces brought in had not been

working yet, by the look of things and it was hard to see an answer immediately.

Fortunately it came when they returned to Cook Park, entertaining Rockdale this time.

Rockdale have not enjoyed the best of fortunes against Penrith when travelling to the foot of the mountains and this game was to prove no exception.

Penrith prevailed, albeit narrowly, with three points in the bag at last.

But having already faced Blacktown, Belconnen and Bankstown they knew they had engaged with three of the mightiest sides in the competition.

They then had to do the same with Apia, before the break and once again found themselves clearly outclassed. They could well have been hammered for a few more than the two goals that the Lambert Park side put past them.

It is not the confident start the side made a year earlier. Then again the qual-

ity of the opposition may not have been as strong last time.

If the team can cope with the strength of the sides around them - and it is clearly a stronger league this season - they will begin to pick up useful points but the signs do not look good.

There is no strike force to speak of, the defence seems hesitant and the loss of Jason Connolly to suspension hit the team hard early on.

They will need to lift considerably if they are to get the kind of season they had last summer again; five games gone does not sound too many, but the next few are tough as well.

After Crescent Star they have to tussle with St George, Bonnyrigg and Canterbury. Points gained against any of those sides will be very well earned. Crescent Star in their next match at Cook Park may well be the litmus test.

The newly promoted Star side has



already picked up the scalps of A.P.I.A. and Central Coast while on the road, so they will be aiming to make it three wins out of four, away from home, when

the competition resumes.

And that is not going to be good news for Penrith.



Central Coast United



Paul Goodwin

Central Coast have been one of the shock merchants of the league so far.

Their pre season form was excellent but in their opening match they fell foul of the regulations by fielding an unregistered player and all that mix up nullified the point they had worked so hard to achieve against Parramatta Eagles at Melita Stadium.

With that disappointment behind them and no point to show for their come-from-behind 2-2 draw, it might have been a chance to atone at home to Crescent Star, a week later, but they were then beaten 2-0 by the other shock merchants of the competition.

Things improved the following week, when coach Jim Foley elected to push Sean Matthews back into the centre of defence and the outcome was a very solid and well

deserved win against Blacktown City at The Gabbie.

That was followed a week later by a very industrious, if dull-to-watch, 0-0 draw at Bonnyrigg.

At last the boys from Mingara had some useful points on the board and it should have been a good basis on which to build their season.

But it all went wrong again at Mingara when Bankstown scored four times in winning there, only conceding two goals just after the break when concentration was at a low ebb.

This begs the question; does the Coast team feel ill at ease at the Mingara Centre. Certainly some players seem to think so as it is a ground that does not lend much atmosphere from the crowd that can be communicated to the team on the field.

The view from the grassy knoll is pretty good for spectators who are much closer to the action than they are at some other

grounds, but all the same it is not as intimate a setting as Plum Park where the team will return at the end of January.

When they resume they tackle St George in Sydney, no easy task for anyone these days. It will be interesting to see if their away form continues at the Stadium.

Two home losses to date does not look good for the Coasties and they have to contend next with Belconnen who are one of the front runners this season.

Belconnen are likely to provide a stiffer test even than Crescent Star and Bankstown so the locals will need to find the kind of stubborn resistance they mustered at each of their away games if they are to return to winning ways.

The new season still holds promise for Foley and his men. It remains to be seen if the club can win at least one game at Mingara before heading south. If not then there will be a lot of work ahead of them.



Canterbury-Marrickville



Paul Goodwin

The Berries did well enough in the pre season to encourage their supporters into believing that this would be a highly successful campaign, but an influx of new players has meant that the promise has not yet been fulfilled.

When the team's first game against Bankstown was called off, due to a wet pitch, they found themselves, like Bonnyrigg, out of sync with most of the other clubs.

The Second Round 4-0 drubbing, at the hands of old foes Belconnen, said more about the Blue Devils' hold over Canterbury, especially at Henson Park, than the Berries' shocking play, though coach Greg Woodhouse did describe it as such all the same.

The deferred game against Bankstown was then squeezed in and despite a spec-

tacular thunderstorm that left Jensen Park awash and a game that was late starting, accordingly, Canterbury were able to record their first win.

They won only 1-0 with a speculative low drive from Sam Larocca, but it was a breakthrough that Woodhouse welcomed.

Then a draw at Rockdale left fans thinking that the corner had been turned - but the score line of only 1-1 meant that goal scoring was still a problem.

Two goals in three games was simply not good enough and a week later another 1-1 draw, this time at home to big guns Apia, showed that while the defence was getting tighter the strikers were taking forever to find their feet.

In fact all three goals had come from the midfield, newcomers David Harding and Sam Larocca and skipper Allan Picken all managing to find the net; but the new strike force is taking time to set-

tle down into any sort of rhythm and has yet to break its duck.

Leigh Gunn and Anthony Mondello have yet to fully hit their straps while Rod Hutchinson has been under an injury cloud but did score in the youth game against Apia so may soon be able to inject some venom into the attack.

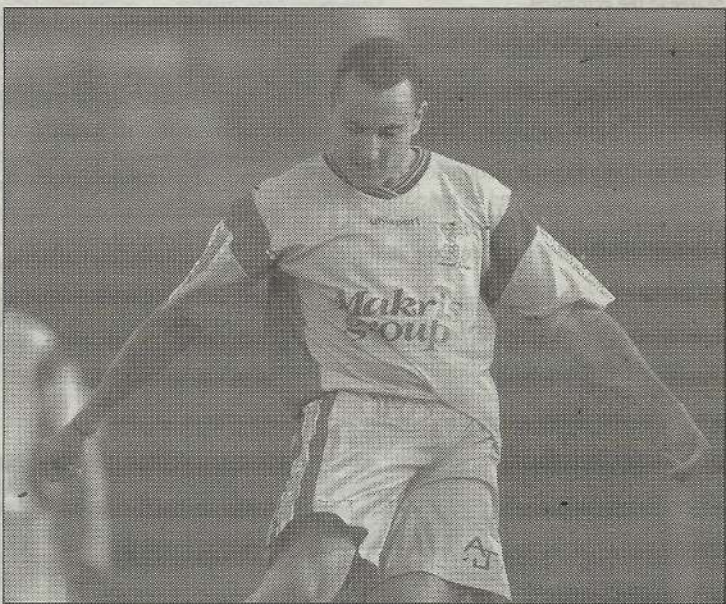
John Kyriazopoulos and Aheleas Kotsopoulos both need to get some consistency before the new formation can really fire this season.

The team seems to have shrugged off its poor defensive showing against Belconnen but did suffer a narrow loss at Crescent Star to end the first phase of matches. That was a real setback but as the second of the winning side's two goals came very late, it seems the main problem is still scoring goals.

The Berries could not have asked for a much tougher game to re-open their campaign than the hosting of Bonnyrigg

at Henson Park and both sides will be focussed on winning and more importantly, their strikers finding the net more often.

Five games into a new season is far too early to be writing off any side and this team looks capable of firing very soon and marching right up the ladder.





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Parramatta Eagles

Greg Stock

After winning the championship in 2001/2 and finishing fifth last season, many pundits were predicting that the Eagles of 2002/3 couldn't possibly match up to the sides of previous years.

At the financial crossroads for the first time in their long history, the Eagles board decided that the best course of action would be restraint and allowed a number of their higher profile players to leave and sought to establish a youth policy under coach Trevor Morgan.

A former Power youth and Macarthur Rams lower grade coach, Morgan has managed to assemble one of the most enthusiastic and hardworking sides in the league that has put in a number of promising performances in the first five games this season.

After dominating their round one assignment against the Coasties, they conceded two very soft goals to seemingly gift their opponents a point, that is until the federation awarded them all three for their opponents fielding an unregistered player. Other bright performances have come against Bankstown City Lions, where they drew 1-1, and Rockdale City Suns, where two goals in two minutes midway through the second half should have really given them more than just a point.

But coach Trevor Morgan is well aware of his sides limitations and is focusing on his sides mental abilities in a bid to move them further up the table. "Our start to the year has been reasonably positive and apart from a few mental lapses we seem to be competing well," said Morgan. "We are a very young team and in this competition we need to be playing at our absolute best

each week or else we'll struggle. So our focus has been on the mental side of the game as much as the physical, making sure that each player prepares in the right frame of mind to ensure we give one hundred percent each match."

With just five experienced campaigners from last season remaining what the Eagles have lost in experience they more than make up for with youth and enthusiasm. Sweeper Daniel Borg has had a solid start to the season alongside veteran stopper Mark Reveley, with Anthony Mittiga looking sharp in the midfield alongside Ben Delicata.

Of the younger brigade, Vic Costabile has shown promise while a teenager named Michael De Bono has forced his way off the bench and into the starting lineup after a couple of big performances off the bench. Two campaigners from last season, John Kelso and Nathan Rivera, have also rejoined the team and



should begin to make their presence felt straight after Christmas.

"Michael (De Bono) is an exceptional talent and keeps improving with every game," said Morgan. "Matthew Rosier has been another to play well while Andy Kane has been lively for us on the forward line." On the Eagles' prospects for the remainder of the year, Morgan still feels his preseason aim is firmly in sight.

"Our aim for the year was always mid table and I have seen nothing in the first five games from our opponents that has made me feel we can't be competitive in every game. It is a long season and providing we get a good run with injuries we can spring a few surprises I am sure."

Rockdale City Suns

Greg Stock

One of the leagues most enigmatic clubs, Rockdale's start to the season has been more akin to a soap opera than a football club.

One of the biggest recruiters during a frenzied offseason, Bill Pilovski assembled what looked like the classiest side in the league, on paper at least, before losing two of their first three matches.

Nick Orlic, Harry James, Steve Karavatakis and the Moric brothers gave the Suns the appearance of an NSL side and after some solid preseason form in the Johnny Warren Cup they were considered to be one of the early favourites for the title.

But after week three, a mini crisis enveloped the club and Pilovski parted ways with captain Richard Plesa stepping into the breach.

The move seemingly galvanized the club and they knocked over Bonnyrigg in a midweek matchup at Jensen Park before recording a come from behind draw against Parramatta Eagles at John Crehan Park.

"It is never a pleasant situation when a coach is sacked but the team has managed to come together as a unit and it is a tribute to the side the way we have performed the past couple of matches," said caretaker coach Richard Plesa.

"There is enough quality in the squad to win plenty of games but being a new side it has been tough to develop cohesion and it could be a little while before we are at our absolute best."

The dramas surrounding Pilovski's departure has seen the rumour mill working overtime with news of a possible replacement, but the club is still not forthcoming on a name.

With names such as Doug

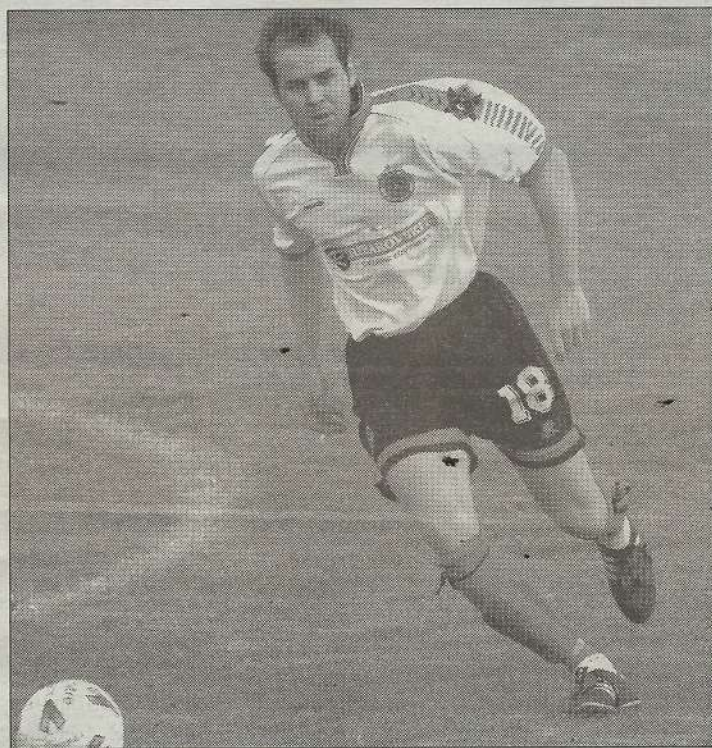
Utjesenovic, Ilija Takac, John Sentas, Lee Sterrey and Ivan Petkovic all being mentioned the decision could be a make or break for the team.

Plesa has also thrown his hat into the ring for the coaching job after some strong performances alongside Nick Orlic.

Harry James has started the season in inspired form but without a creative midfield forwards Steve Karavatakis and Denis Alilovic have been wasted.

Tony Sekulic still looks to be well short of his best while goalkeeper Peter Trajceviski also appears a little short on confidence.

Like sister club Bankstown did at the same time last year, when they parted ways with then coach Lee Sterrey, the team could struggle to gain any real momentum. Whatever the outcome, January is set to be a crucial month for the fortunes of Rockdale.



Bonnyrigg White Eagles

Paul Goodwin

Much was expected of the White Eagles after they won the pre-season Johnny Warren Cup, upsetting Rockdale City Suns in the final.

Always a strong side that likes to play football, and with a demanding group of supporters who want results as well as quality, the task of a coach at the Serbian Centre is never an easy one.

Ljube Jancev found himself behind the eight ball when the team's first match of the new season at Rockdale's Cringila 'home' ground was called off.

The Bonnyrigg side picked up straight away with a tight 2-1 win at home over top fancies Apia-Leichhardt.

They looked fine in that match if not entirely convincing, as they tended to capitalise on the visitors' lack of finishing ability, but most expected the White

Eagles to make the form good in successive games.

They then went to Sydney Crescent Star, a side they had defeated easily in pre-season and were on the wrong end of a 1-0 result at Lidcombe Oval where the winner came in the dying stages.

Unlucky then, perhaps?

The side struggled to a stalemate 0-0 draw at home to Central Coast who had already beaten Blacktown away, but was it good enough?

Clearly not, as within days the side suffered two defeats, both games coming in a rushed four day period.

The deferred game against Rockdale came and went and it was the White Eagles misfortune to tackle the Suns on the day after they had appointed a new coach and were ready to perform at last. The tight 2-1 loss to the Rockdale Suns was a big blow and Jancev had experimented with his formation after the

Central Coast game without it paying dividends.

Worse was to follow as the next weekend a very confident St George side came to the Serbian Centre and triumphed.

The Saints looked the better side throughout and even though Bonnyrigg had held the upper hand on the scoreboard for long periods it was no great shock when the winner came in the last minute and again points were lost.

The important thing to stress here is that Bonnyrigg has tackled some of the best sides, if not the form sides, of the competition in their early games and that postponed opening game did them no favours at all.

The win over A.P.I.A. was crucial but the loss to Rockdale was devastating. They were not convincing that day and have not been convincing all along.

Too many positional and personnel

changes may have had something to do with it.

Key midfielder Fred Umlil was out of action with an arm injury and goalkeeper Steve Angelov had to miss a couple of games due to personal problems.

When the season resumes Jancev and his men face another tough challenge, against Greg Woodhouse's Canterbury; a former Bonnyrigg coach up against his old side and desperate for points after a very tardy start to the new season.

It seems unlikely that the wheels have fallen off at Bonnyrigg after just five matches, but the team needs to settle down into a unit that can build some understanding together if it is to succeed long term. Too many changes, forced or otherwise, have made it hard to achieve that necessary stability.

There are some very hard games ahead and the club will want to start winning again soon to satisfy those ultra demanding supporters. And play attractive football too.





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FIRST GRADE TABLE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	D	Pts
Belconnen Blue Devils	5	3	1	1	11	5	6	10
Bankstown City Lions	5	3	1	1	11	7	4	10
St George Saints	5	3	1	1	7	3	4	10
Sydney Crescent Star	5	3	0	2	8	4	4	9
Blacktown City Demons	5	2	1	2	7	5	2	7
A.P.I.A. Leichhardt Tigers	5	2	1	2	6	6	0	7
Bonnyrigg White Eagles	5	2	1	2	5	5	0	7
Parramatta Eagles	5	1	3	1	8	6	2	6
Rockdale City Suns	5	1	2	2	5	7	-2	5
Canterbury Marrickville	5	1	2	2	3	8	-5	5
Central Coast United	5	1	1	3	3	10	-7	4
Penrith Panthers	5	1	0	4	2	10	-8	3

GRADE 20 TABLE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	D	Pts
Parramatta Eagles	5	4	1	0	15	2	13	13
Belconnen Blue Devils	5	3	2	0	9	2	-7	11
A.P.I.A. Leichhardt Tigers	5	3	1	1	14	8	6	10
Bonnyrigg White Eagles	5	2	2	1	10	9	1	8
Blacktown City Demons	5	2	1	2	6	10	-4	7
Bankstown City Lions	5	2	1	2	9	14	-5	7
Canterbury Marrickville	5	2	0	3	6	12	-6	6
Central Coast United	5	1	2	2	7	7	0	5
Sydney Crescent Star	5	1	2	2	8	9	-1	5
Penrith Panthers	5	1	1	3	9	10	-1	4
St George Saints	5	1	1	3	6	8	-2	4
Rockdale City Suns	5	1	0	4	5	13	-8	3

NEXT ROUND 6

FIRST GRADE

HOME TEAM	AWAY TEAM	DATE	KICK-OFF	GROUND
Penrith Panthers v	Sydney Crescent Star	Sat. 10th Jan.	7.00pm	Cook Park
St George Saints v	Central Coast United	Sat. 10th Jan.	7.00pm	St George Stadium
Blacktown City Demons v	Rockdale City Suns	Sat. 10th Jan.	7.00pm	Gabbie Stadium
Belconnen Blue Devils v	Bankstown City Lions	Sat. 10th Jan.	7.00pm	McKellar Soccer Centre
Parramatta Eagles v	A.P.I.A. Leichhardt	Sun. 11th Jan.	6.00pm	Melita Stadium
Canterbury Marrickville v	Bonnyrigg WE	Sun. 11th Jan.	5.00pm	Henson Park

GRADE 20

HOME TEAM	AWAY TEAM	DATE	KICK-OFF	GROUND
Penrith Panthers v	Sydney Crescent Star	Sat. 10th Jan.	5.00pm	Cook Park
St George Saints v	Central Coast United	Sat. 10th Jan.	5.00pm	St George Stadium
Blacktown City Demons v	Rockdale City Suns	Sat. 10th Jan.	5.00pm	Gabbie Stadium
Belconnen Blue Devils v	Bankstown City Lions	Sat. 10th Jan.	4.30pm	McKellar SC
Parramatta Eagles v	A.P.I.A. Leichhardt	Sun. 11th Jan.	4.00pm	Melita Stadium
Canterbury Marrickville v	Bonnyrigg WE	Sun. 11th Jan.	3.00pm	Henson Park

LEADING GOALSCORERS

- 7 Matthew Borg (BCL)
- 4 Daniel Macor (BBD)
- 3 Ilija Prenzovski (BBD), Ben Deighan (RCS)
- 2 Bruno Beddoni (SG), Hakan Sevgin (SCS), Filip Marzec (SCS), Manny Papageorgiou (BWE), Anthony Galliozzi (BBD), Zlatko Arambasic (ALT), Vic Costabile (PE), Luke Roodenburg (BCD), Demetri Nicolaou (BCL), Paul Urlovic (BCD), Aaron Burgess (BWE), Daniel Watkins (SG), Norman Tome (AL), Denis Alilovic (RCS)
- 1 Raphael Bove (SG), Josh Maguire (BCD), Marcus Phillips (BCD), David Barrett (ALT), George Issa (SCC), Yavuz Ekinci (SCS), Matthew Clowes (PE), Jamie Subat (CCU), Daniel Surridge (CCU), Jason Connolly (PP), Greg Collins (BWE), Alex Asanovic (BCL), Sam Larocca (CMO), Nathan Byrn (CCU), Anthony Mittiga (PE), Allan Picken (CMO), Jason Sciberras (PP), David Harding (CMO), Simon Catanzaro (BCD), Daniel Borg (Parramatta), David Arranz (BBD), Scott Conlon (BBD), David Brewer (CCU), Robert Mileski (BCL), Marc Falzon (CCU), George Lagoudakis (SG), James Kovas (SG), James Monie (AL), Daniel Willoughby (SCS), Costello De' Andre (SCS), Ben Delicata (PE), Nathan Rivera (PE)

NSW PREMIER LEAGUE TIPPING COLUMN



PAUL GOODWIN
SOCCER NSW JOURNALIST

Points = 10



TARYN ROCKALL
NSW SAPPHIRES CAPTAIN

Points = 6



ANDY PASCHALIDIS
ELITE SPORTS TRAVEL

Points = 11



GREG STOCK
SOCCER NSW JOURNALIST

Points = 7



'PEANUTS'
THE MONKEY

Points = 9



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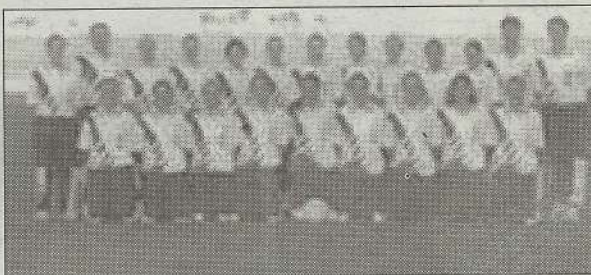
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WOMEN'S SOCCER



NSW Sapphires goalkeeper Cassandra Kell as been selected to train with the Matildas



The NSWIS Women's Squad: breeding ground of Matildas

Sarah Garven, Gill, and Walsh have all previously been involved in senior national team camps or national 'train-on' squads at some stage in their careers, whilst those celebrating their first real opportunity at this level are Leah Blayney, Joanne Burgess, and Lisa Gilbert.

Four of those included in the camp – Gill Foster, Cheryl Salisbury, Slatyer, and Sacha Wainwright – are currently injured and at various stages of rehabilitation from their longer-term injuries.

They will be involved with rehabilitation and assessment programs during the nine-day period with a view to their selection availability.

Santrac had both this year's World Cup showing as well as next year's Olympics in mind when putting together this group.

"What was important when reflecting on the World Cup was performances and results," he said.

"Whilst the performances in our first two matches were good, we obviously didn't gain the desired results.

"We've just completed the WNSL season, and these are the players who have shown they may have what it takes to play at the next level."

Added Santrac, "This is an ideal opportunity to invite players to be assessed within a camp environment and compete for places in the Olympics.

"This is the first camp we've had available to us to prepare for the Olympics and more specifically the Olympic Qualifiers.

"I'm excited about it and also I'm sure the players are as well. This time is critical, being our first camp in the build-up to the Qualifiers."

The annual Australia Cup will be played in February next year, with details of the international tournament yet to be released.

The Oceania Olympic Games Qualifiers are scheduled for 2-15 March in Vanuatu, from which the winner advances to the Athens Olympic Games in August.



Seven members of the Championship winning NSW Sapphires have been rewarded for their efforts throughout the WNSL season with an invitation to join an AIS selection camp in January that will be used to select the Matilda's team for the upcoming 2004 Olympic Games in Athens

A group of 32 players has been named to attend an AIS selection camp next month it was announced last Tuesday by AIS/National Women's Coach Adrian Santrac, with each player given a chance to push for Matildas selection at the start of this Olympic Games year.

The camp will be held 10-18 January 2004 at the Australian Institute of Sport in Canberra.

Soon after its conclusion, the AIS Scholarship/Matildas Squad will be named in readiness for the Australia Cup in February and the Oceania Olympic Games Qualifiers the following month.

The camp will be the first activity of the national teams program since the Matildas competed at the FIFA Women's World Cup in September.

Seventeen of that twenty-member World Cup Team, plus Thea Slatyer who was forced out of the side through injury, are included in the camp list, with Santrac also including many new faces in the mix following impressive performances in the just-completed WNSL season.

Gaining their opportunity to make a Matildas comeback are Kate McShea and Amy Taylor who have both been out of the green and gold since 2002.

Michelle Carney and Sarah Walsh were both selected for the Australian U21 Team in 1999 (although Walsh withdrew through injury), whilst there are four who competed at the 2002 FIFA U19 Women's World Championship – Catherine Cannuli, Emma Davison, Katie Gill, and Lana Harch.

Lisa De Vanna is also a former Young Matilda. Carney, Davison, Belinda Dawney, De Vanna,



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2004 CONTINENTAL TYRES CUP DRAW



ROUND 1 14-15.02.04				ROUND 2 21-22.02.04				ROUND 3 03.03.04				ROUND 4 17.03.04				QUARTER FINALS 3-4.04.04				SEMI FINALS 28.04.04				FINAL 16.05.04			
Fixture 1	Team 1	Team 2	Winner Fixture 1	Fixture 33	Team 3	Team 4	Winner Fixture 2	Fixture 49	Blacktown City Demons (1)	Winner Fixture 33	Winner Fixture 49	Fixture 65	Team 5	Team 6	Winner Fixture 50	Winner Fixture 65	Winner Quarter Final 1	Winner Quarter Final 1	Winner Quarter Final 1	Winner Quarter Final 1	Winner Quarter Final 1	Winner Quarter Final 1	Winner Quarter Final 1	Winner Quarter Final 1	Winner Quarter Final 1	Winner Quarter Final 1	Winner Quarter Final 1
Fixture 2	Team 3	Team 4	Winner Fixture 3	Fixture 34	Team 5	Team 6	Winner Fixture 4	Fixture 50	Hajduk Wanderers United (16)	Winner Fixture 34	Winner Fixture 50	Fixture 66	Team 7	Team 8	Winner Fixture 51	Winner Fixture 66	Winner Quarter Final 2	Winner Quarter Final 2	Winner Quarter Final 2	Winner Quarter Final 2	Winner Quarter Final 2	Winner Quarter Final 2	Winner Quarter Final 2	Winner Quarter Final 2	Winner Quarter Final 2	Winner Quarter Final 2	Winner Quarter Final 2
Fixture 3	Team 7	Team 8	Winner Fixture 5	Fixture 35	Team 9	Team 10	Winner Fixture 5	Fixture 51	Fairfield Bulls (12)	Winner Fixture 35	Winner Fixture 51	Fixture 67	Team 11	Team 12	Winner Fixture 52	Winner Fixture 67	Winner Quarter Final 3	Winner Quarter Final 3	Winner Quarter Final 3	Winner Quarter Final 3	Winner Quarter Final 3	Winner Quarter Final 3	Winner Quarter Final 3	Winner Quarter Final 3	Winner Quarter Final 3	Winner Quarter Final 3	Winner Quarter Final 3
Fixture 4	Team 11	Team 12	Winner Fixture 6	Fixture 36	Team 13	Team 14	Winner Fixture 6	Fixture 52	Penrith Panthers (8)	Winner Fixture 36	Winner Fixture 52	Fixture 68	Team 15	Team 16	Winner Fixture 53	Winner Fixture 68	Winner Quarter Final 4	Winner Quarter Final 4	Winner Quarter Final 4	Winner Quarter Final 4	Winner Quarter Final 4	Winner Quarter Final 4	Winner Quarter Final 4	Winner Quarter Final 4	Winner Quarter Final 4	Winner Quarter Final 4	Winner Quarter Final 4
Fixture 5	Team 17	Team 18	Winner Fixture 7	Fixture 37	Team 19	Team 20	Winner Fixture 7	Fixture 53	Parramatta Eagles (5)	Winner Fixture 37	Winner Fixture 53	Fixture 69	Team 21	Team 22	Winner Fixture 54	Winner Fixture 69	Winner Quarter Final 5	Winner Quarter Final 5	Winner Quarter Final 5	Winner Quarter Final 5	Winner Quarter Final 5	Winner Quarter Final 5	Winner Quarter Final 5	Winner Quarter Final 5	Winner Quarter Final 5	Winner Quarter Final 5	Winner Quarter Final 5
Fixture 6	Team 21	Team 22	Winner Fixture 8	Fixture 38	Team 23	Team 24	Winner Fixture 8	Fixture 54	Sydney Crescent Star (13)	Winner Fixture 38	Winner Fixture 54	Fixture 70	Team 25	Team 26	Winner Fixture 55	Winner Fixture 70	Winner Quarter Final 6	Winner Quarter Final 6	Winner Quarter Final 6	Winner Quarter Final 6	Winner Quarter Final 6	Winner Quarter Final 6	Winner Quarter Final 6	Winner Quarter Final 6	Winner Quarter Final 6	Winner Quarter Final 6	Winner Quarter Final 6
Fixture 7	Team 27	Team 28	Winner Fixture 9	Fixture 39	Team 29	Team 30	Winner Fixture 9	Fixture 55	St George Saints (9)	Winner Fixture 39	Winner Fixture 55	Fixture 71	Team 31	Team 32	Winner Fixture 56	Winner Fixture 71	Winner Quarter Final 7	Winner Quarter Final 7	Winner Quarter Final 7	Winner Quarter Final 7	Winner Quarter Final 7	Winner Quarter Final 7	Winner Quarter Final 7	Winner Quarter Final 7	Winner Quarter Final 7	Winner Quarter Final 7	Winner Quarter Final 7
Fixture 8	Team 31	Team 32	Winner Fixture 10	Fixture 40	Team 33	Team 34	Winner Fixture 10	Fixture 56	Belconnen Blue Devils (4)	Winner Fixture 40	Winner Fixture 56	Fixture 72	Team 35	Team 36	Winner Fixture 57	Winner Fixture 72	Winner Quarter Final 8	Winner Quarter Final 8	Winner Quarter Final 8	Winner Quarter Final 8	Winner Quarter Final 8	Winner Quarter Final 8	Winner Quarter Final 8	Winner Quarter Final 8	Winner Quarter Final 8	Winner Quarter Final 8	Winner Quarter Final 8
Fixture 9	Team 37	Team 38	Winner Fixture 11	Fixture 41	Team 39	Team 40	Winner Fixture 11	Fixture 57	Bonnyrigg White Eagles (3)	Winner Fixture 41	Winner Fixture 57	Fixture 73	Team 41	Team 42	Winner Fixture 58	Winner Fixture 73	Winner Quarter Final 9	Winner Quarter Final 9	Winner Quarter Final 9	Winner Quarter Final 9	Winner Quarter Final 9	Winner Quarter Final 9	Winner Quarter Final 9	Winner Quarter Final 9	Winner Quarter Final 9	Winner Quarter Final 9	Winner Quarter Final 9
Fixture 10	Team 41	Team 42	Winner Fixture 12	Fixture 42	Team 43	Team 44	Winner Fixture 12	Fixture 58	Bankstown City Lions (10)	Winner Fixture 42	Winner Fixture 58	Fixture 74	Team 45	Team 46	Winner Fixture 59	Winner Fixture 74	Winner Quarter Final 10	Winner Quarter Final 10	Winner Quarter Final 10	Winner Quarter Final 10	Winner Quarter Final 10	Winner Quarter Final 10	Winner Quarter Final 10	Winner Quarter Final 10	Winner Quarter Final 10	Winner Quarter Final 10	Winner Quarter Final 10
Fixture 11	Team 45	Team 46	Winner Fixture 13	Fixture 43	Team 47	Team 48	Winner Fixture 13	Fixture 59	Fraser Park Dragons (14)	Winner Fixture 43	Winner Fixture 59	Fixture 75	Team 49	Team 50	Winner Fixture 60	Winner Fixture 75	Winner Quarter Final 11	Winner Quarter Final 11	Winner Quarter Final 11	Winner Quarter Final 11	Winner Quarter Final 11	Winner Quarter Final 11	Winner Quarter Final 11	Winner Quarter Final 11	Winner Quarter Final 11	Winner Quarter Final 11	Winner Quarter Final 11
Fixture 12	Team 49	Team 50	Winner Fixture 14	Fixture 44	Team 51	Team 52	Winner Fixture 14	Fixture 60	Rockdale City Suns (6)	Winner Fixture 44	Winner Fixture 60	Fixture 76	Team 53	Team 54	Winner Fixture 61	Winner Fixture 76	Winner Quarter Final 12	Winner Quarter Final 12	Winner Quarter Final 12	Winner Quarter Final 12	Winner Quarter Final 12	Winner Quarter Final 12	Winner Quarter Final 12	Winner Quarter Final 12	Winner Quarter Final 12	Winner Quarter Final 12	Winner Quarter Final 12
Fixture 13	Team 53	Team 54	Winner Fixture 15	Fixture 45	Team 55	Team 56	Winner Fixture 15	Fixture 61	Canterbury Marrickville Olympic	Winner Fixture 45	Winner Fixture 61	Fixture 77	Team 57	Team 58	Winner Fixture 62	Winner Fixture 77	Winner Quarter Final 13	Winner Quarter Final 13	Winner Quarter Final 13	Winner Quarter Final 13	Winner Quarter Final 13	Winner Quarter Final 13	Winner Quarter Final 13	Winner Quarter Final 13	Winner Quarter Final 13	Winner Quarter Final 13	Winner Quarter Final 13
Fixture 14	Team 57	Team 58	Winner Fixture 16	Fixture 46	Team 59	Team 60	Winner Fixture 16	Fixture 62	Central Coast United (11)	Winner Fixture 46	Winner Fixture 62	Fixture 78	Team 61	Team 62	Winner Fixture 63	Winner Fixture 78	Winner Quarter Final 14	Winner Quarter Final 14	Winner Quarter Final 14	Winner Quarter Final 14	Winner Quarter Final 14	Winner Quarter Final 14	Winner Quarter Final 14	Winner Quarter Final 14	Winner Quarter Final 14	Winner Quarter Final 14	Winner Quarter Final 14
Fixture 15	Team 61	Team 62	Winner Fixture 17	Fixture 47	Team 63	Team 64	Winner Fixture 17	Fixture 63	Sutherland Sharks (15)	Winner Fixture 47	Winner Fixture 63	Fixture 79	Team 65	Team 66	Winner Fixture 64	Winner Fixture 79	Winner Quarter Final 15	Winner Quarter Final 15	Winner Quarter Final 15	Winner Quarter Final 15	Winner Quarter Final 15	Winner Quarter Final 15	Winner Quarter Final 15	Winner Quarter Final 15	Winner Quarter Final 15	Winner Quarter Final 15	Winner Quarter Final 15
Fixture 16	Team 65	Team 66	Winner Fixture 18	Fixture 48	Team 67	Team 68	Winner Fixture 18	Fixture 64	A.P.I.A. Leichhardt Tigers (2)	Winner Fixture 48	Winner Fixture 64	Fixture 80	Team 69	Team 70	Winner Fixture 65	Winner Fixture 80	Winner Quarter Final 16	Winner Quarter Final 16	Winner Quarter Final 16	Winner Quarter Final 16	Winner Quarter Final 16	Winner Quarter Final 16	Winner Quarter Final 16	Winner Quarter Final 16	Winner Quarter Final 16	Winner Quarter Final 16	Winner Quarter Final 16
Fixture 17	Team 69	Team 70	Winner Fixture 19	Fixture 49	Team 71	Team 72	Winner Fixture 19	Fixture 80		Winner Fixture 49	Winner Fixture 80																
Fixture 18	Team 71	Team 72	Winner Fixture 20	Fixture 50	Team 73	Team 74	Winner Fixture 20			Winner Fixture 50																	
Fixture 19	Team 73	Team 74	Winner Fixture 21	Fixture 51	Team 75	Team 76	Winner Fixture 21			Winner Fixture 51																	
Fixture 20	Team 75	Team 76	Winner Fixture 22	Fixture 52	Team 77	Team 78	Winner Fixture 22			Winner Fixture 52																	
Fixture 21	Team 77	Team 78	Winner Fixture 23	Fixture 53	Team 79	Team 80	Winner Fixture 23			Winner Fixture 53																	
Fixture 22	Team 79	Team 80	Winner Fixture 24	Fixture 54	Team 81	Team 82	Winner Fixture 24			Winner Fixture 54																	
Fixture 23	Team 81	Team 82	Winner Fixture 25	Fixture 55	Team 83	Team 84	Winner Fixture 25			Winner Fixture 55																	
Fixture 24	Team 83	Team 84	Winner Fixture 26	Fixture 56	Team 85	Team 86	Winner Fixture 26			Winner Fixture 56																	
Fixture 25	Team 85	Team 86	Winner Fixture 27	Fixture 57	Team 87	Team 88	Winner Fixture 27			Winner Fixture 57																	
Fixture 26	Team 87	Team 88	Winner Fixture 28	Fixture 58	Team 89	Team 90	Winner Fixture 28			Winner Fixture 58																	
Fixture 27	Team 89	Team 90	Winner Fixture 29	Fixture 59	Team 91	Team 92	Winner Fixture 29			Winner Fixture 59																	
Fixture 28	Team 91	Team 92	Winner Fixture 30	Fixture 60	Team 93	Team 94	Winner Fixture 30			Winner Fixture 60																	
Fixture 29	Team 93	Team 94	Winner Fixture 31	Fixture 61	Team 95	Team 96	Winner Fixture 31			Winner Fixture 61																	
Fixture 30	Team 95	Team 96	Winner Fixture 32	Fixture 62	Team 97	Team 98	Winner Fixture 32			Winner Fixture 62																	
Fixture 31	Team 97	Team 98	Winner Fixture 33	Fixture 63	Team 99	Team 100	Winner Fixture 33			Winner Fixture 63																	
Fixture 32	Team 99	Team 100	Winner Fixture 34	Fixture 64	Team 101	Team 102	Winner Fixture 34			Winner Fixture 64																	

Continental



2004 CONTINENTAL TYRES CUP

PREMIER LEAGUE
A.P.I.A. LEICHARDT TIGERS
BANKSTOWN CITY LIONS
BELCONNEN BLUE DEVILS
BLACKTOWN CITY DEMONS
BONNYRIGG WHITE EAGLES
CANTERBURY MARRICKVILLE
CENTRAL COAST UNITED FC
PARRAMATTA EAGLES
PENRITH PANTHERS
ROCKDALE CITY SUNS
ST GEORGE SAINTS
SYDNEY CRESCENT STAR

SUPER LEAGUE
DULWICH HILL
FAIRFIELD BULLS
FRASER PARK DRAGONS
HAJDUK WANDERERS UNITED
HURSTVILLE CITY MINOTAURS
HURSTVILLE ZSC
MACARTHUR RAMS
MANLY WARRINGAH DOLPHIN
MSC LIVERPOOL
NORTHERN TIGERS
RYDE CITY
STANMORE HAWKS
SUTHERLAND SHARKS
SYDNEY UNIVERSITY

DIVISION ONE
BATHURST '75
BELMORE HERCULES
CAMDEN TIGERS
FAIRFIELD CITY LIONS
HILLS UNITED
LIVERPOOL BOSSY
MT DRUITT TOWN
MT PRITCHARD
NEPEAN ASSOCIATION
SCHOFIELDS SCORPIONS
THE WANDERERS
WESTERN RAGE
WHITE CITY
WOLLONGONG UNITED

DIVISION TWO
AUBURN STAR
BLACKTOWN ASSOCIATION
GREENISLAND SC
GREYSTANES SC
HAKOAH
INTER LIONS
PROSPECT UNITED
SPRINGWOOD SC
SOUTHERN STAR SHARKS
UNIVERSITY OF NSW
WESTERN RED DEVILS

DIVISION THREE
BALMAIN FC
EARLWOOD WANDERERS
EAST COAST MAGIC
GAZY LANSDALE
GLADESVILLS UNITED
KELLYVILLE KOLTS
ROOSTERS FC
SYDNEY CEDARS
TRASANDINOS

CH/CHAMP. & ASSOC.
BROOKVALE
NORMANHURST
CONNELL POINT
LIVERPOOL CITY ROBINS
GYMEA
ARNCLIFFE AURORA
QUAKERS HILL
NARELLAN RANGERS
PAGEWOOD
DOONSIDE HAWKS
NORTH SYDNEY
LIDCOMBE WARATAHS
WEST PYMBLE
WEST PENNANT HILLS/CHERRYBROOK
BANKSTOWN SPORTS
NEPEAN
ASQUITH

NATIONAL SPORTS SC
SYDNEY DWARFS
WESTERN BRANCH

16 SEEDED TEAMS @ RD 3
1 - BLACKTOWN CITY
16 - HAJDUK WANDERERS
12 - FAIRFIELD BULLS
8 - PENRITH PANTHERS
5 - PARRAMATTA EAGLES
13 - SYDNEY CRESCENT STAR
9 - ST GEORGE SAINTS
4 - BELCONNEN BLUE DEVILS
3 - BONNYRIGG WE
10 - BANKSTOWN CITY LIONS
14 - FRASER PARK DRAGONS
6 - ROCKDALE CITY SUNS
7 - CANTERBURY M'VILLE
11 - CENTRAL COAST UNITED
15 - SUTHERLAND SHARKS
2 - A.P.I.A. LEICHARDT

RD 1 = 64 TEAMS
RD 2 = 32 TEAMS
RD 3 = 16 qual. + 16 SEEDED
RD 4 = 16 TEAMS
RD 5 = 8 TEAMS
RD 6 = 4 TEAMS
RD 7 = FINAL



SOCCER NSW

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Soccer NSW
is proud to announce the
appointment of the
following **Girls State Team**
coaches for 2004:

Lisa Warrener
Under 14 NSW Metropolitan
Girls State Team

Stephen Roche
Under 14 NSW Country Girls
State Team

Allan Sheldrick
Under 15 NSW Metropolitan
Girls State Team

Jeff Blake
Under 15 NSW Country Girls
State Team

Steve Marsh
Under 17 Metropolitan Girls
State Team

Peter Page
Under 17 NSW Country Girls
State Team

Trials for girls junior state teams were held for the U14 NSW Metropolitan Girls team on Monday 15th and Thursday 18th December at Valentine Sports Park.

From these trials, 30 players were selected to attend a final selection camp. The dates of the camp are U14 NSW Metropolitan & NSW Country Friday 9th January, 2004 to Wednesday 14th January, 2004.

For the NSW Metropolitan Under 15 and Under 17 Girls teams, and also NSW Country teams, 30-player squads were chosen to attend selection camps on Friday 16th January, 2004 to Wednesday 21st January, 2004.

Club Profile

EAGLES OF THE NORTH

The St Ives Soccer Club was formed in 1957 and has been in continuous operation for 47 years. It has grown to be one of the largest soccer clubs on Sydney's North Shore, with more than 600 members, fifty soccer teams and an army of mums and dads and volunteers helping out behind the scenes.

Our philosophy at St Ives Soccer Club

is to teach boys and girls to compete to the best of their ability and to enjoy the sport of soccer.

Our club house is at our home ground on Warrimoo Oval, St Ives Chase. There are changing sheds, BBQ facilities and a children's playground at the back of the oval.

Warrimoo is where many of our

senior games take place, but we also have "home" grounds at Darnley Oval and Toolang Oval.

St Ives Soccer Club is part of the Kuring Gai District Soccer Association (KDSA) and plays competing teams from the Upper North Shore in the KDSA League.

www.stivessoccer.com.au

Canterbury Juniors Soccer Club

Canterbury Junior Soccer Football Club was formed in 1923.

Due to the initiative of Andy Burton, a group of enthusiasts met and sat on a rock pile situated on a vacant block of land where Canterbury Hotel now stands.

Jack Daley was elected president, Andy Burton secretary and Tom English treasurer.

Later that year, Hurlstone Park was formed followed by the formation of the Canterbury and District Soccer Football Association (CDSFA).

Canterbury Juniors were then known as Canterbury Park, wearing a strip that was blue and gold vertical stripes. The team's home ground was Canterbury Park.

To commence the local district competitions, the CDSFA conducted All Age and U/16 years leagues.

Canterbury Park won both these competitions.

The club's growth increased greatly the number of teams and in 1925 Canterbury entered eight teams and acquired Goodlets Bush (now Canterbury Race Course parking area) as a second home ground.

Also in 1925, Roy Crowhurst joined our U/16 team and subsequently was the first of our players to represent Australia.

Club growth continued. By 1933 Canterbury had won many competitions and were recognised as the strongest NSW club.

In 1936 the CDSFA commenced the initial competition for juveniles by promoting an U/14 competition in which Canterbury finished runners-up to Belmore.

Around 1938, Goodlets was taken over by the race course and teams moved back to Canterbury Park.

Around 1940 Canterbury acquired

Lees Park, and as of now this pleasant pitch is still the team's headquarters.

In 1942, World War II was in full swing. Most of the senior players were in the Armed Forces, leaving only U/16 and U/14 teams.

With no money, no strip and no footballs, Andy Burton was forced to resign and took up the challenge of Canterbury Bankstown Senior State League Club.

Before leaving, he approached former player Frank Nobbs to control the Canterbury Juniors club.

In those days, the club control was a one man band; no committees and no general helpers.

But what the club did have was loyal and dedicated Canterbury players, and by 1946, Canterbury was again the premier club of the district.

Due to a large recruitment campaign, the number of juniors expanded rapidly.

Players not only from our area, but also from schools

outside our area such as Leichhardt came to the club, producing the great juniors Canterbury had during this era.

The club gained tremendous success. Two of these players; Ray Neal and Bruce Young, went on to later represent Australia.

With times being tough, the U/2's of 1947, due to the war, had their strip made and donated by local horse trainer Mary Shipton.

She used the gold ribbons won by her horses to make the gold 'V' on the boys strips.

The first official Club Championship in 1947 was won by Canterbury and in 1948 and 1949 the club was also successful.

After a string of victories in 1956-57-58-59-60-61-63 and 1964, the club became the dominant force in the association.

Canterbury then had a spell of eight

seasons before winning the Club Championship again in 1972-75.

The 80's saw Canterbury win many premierships and in particular Premier League, achieving four First Grade and an amazing six consecutive Reserve Grade titles.

The 80s also saw two of the club's greatest achievements on the park.

In 1981 our Premier League squad proved its state-wide superiority by becoming the first and only team from this association to win the NSW Amateur Cup, following this in 1983 with the runners up medal.

In 1983 Canterbury U14s became the Champion of Champions and in 1984 the club won the Under 16 State Cup, giving Canterbury three state titles in four years.

After quiet period from 1984, in which Canterbury lost a number of teams, Peter Munton became the new President, bringing with him his business sense, which helped to further develop and strengthen the club.

Ten years later, the club fielded some 29 teams.

During this rebuilding period the club achieved some outstanding results including a victory by the 1990 Premier League First Grade side coached by Peter.

1993 saw the club rise to win the District Club Championship.

The club also acquired Croydon Park as its second ground in exchange for vacating Rosedale Park.

This led the way to the building of Canterbury's excellent new clubhouse and dressing room facilities at Lees Park.

The club won the coveted Club Championship again in 1995 and to this day is still one of the most feared club in the district.

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